

STRONG

GOD GIVES SAMSON STRENGTH



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UNIT 11 - GOD GIVES SAMSON STRENGTH

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STRONG

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

UNIT 11-ELEMENTARY

This month's focus is on Samson. Your kids will be learning that God is the source of our strength. The focus of this unit is two-fold. First, we want children to recognize the overwhelming power of God. He is the only omnipotent (all-powerful) being ever to exist, and the more we understand and embrace that truth, the more we will worship and rely on Him. Secondly, we want children to see that all our strength comes from Him. We pray they know they can trust God because **God gives His people strength.**

WEEK 1

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Sit Down If...* Activity Page (1 per class), Sentence Strips (1 per child), Black Construction Paper (2 per child), Scissors, Glue Sticks, Staplers, White Paper (optional), Tape (optional)

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Animal Prints* Activity Page (1 per group) | *Animal Names* Activity Page (1 per group), *Answer Key* Activity Page (1 per group), *God is My Strength* Activity Page, White Cardstock Paper (1 per child), Scissors, Markers or Crayons, Miscellaneous Craft Supplies (optional)

WEEK 3

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Rope (1 per class), *Samson's Free* Activity Page, White Cardstock Paper (1 per child), Scissors, String Pieces (2, 3" pieces per child), Glue Sticks, Markers or Crayons

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Samson Destroys a Temple* Activity Page (1 per child), Markers or Crayons, Scissors, Glue, Red Construction Paper (1 per child)

GOD'S PLAN FOR SAMSON

BIBLE PASSAGE

Judges 13:1-25 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God gives His people strength.

FOCUS VERSE

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his great power." Ephesians 6:10

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Sit Down If...* Activity Page | Sentence Strips | Black Construction Paper | Scissors | Glue Sticks | Staplers | White Paper (optional) | Tape (optional) |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your favorite story? (This can be a story from a book, movie, etc.)
- Who is your favorite fictional character? (For younger children, explain that fictional means "made-up" or "not real." Again, this can be from a book, movie, etc.)

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

This month you will be teaching about the strength of God as seen in the life of Samson. A secondary theme we hope you will notice is that God is always looking out for His people. From the moment Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God put into motion His plan of redemption. Ultimately, that meant that He would send Jesus to be our Savior. However, throughout the Old Testament, we get glimpses of God's goodness, strength, and strategy. Samson's story is one of those places where we see God making a way to rescue His people from their enemies.

Help the children understand that God is strong, mighty, and powerful. You may want to teach them the word *omnipotent*, which means unlimited in power. Our Lord can do anything! But make sure they see that God always uses His power for His glory and our good, even when we don't understand what is happening. In your worship time, incorporate songs that relate to these themes. Three of our favorites are:

1. "Super Strong God" by *Hillsong Kids*
2. "What a Mighty God We Serve" by *Listener Kids*
3. "Jesus" by *Chris Tomlin*

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Begin with prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Lord, we praise You for Your strength and love. Thank You for giving us more than we deserve. Now, help us hear and believe what You want to teach us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Hold up a Bible. Say, “Who is this book about? Right! This book is about God! It’s also about us and all sorts of other people, but first and most importantly, it is a story about God. In fact, every little story in this book helps us know the Lord a little better and understand God’s plan for us! Isn’t that exciting?”

“Today we’re going to start new lessons from the Bible that teach us about God’s power. Did you know that no one is stronger and more mighty than God? These lessons come from the Old Testament book of Judges.” (Turn to the book of Judges, and show the children where it is in the Bible.)

“In Judges, we find the story of a man named Samson. Samson was probably the strongest man ever to live. Where do you think Samson got his strength? Right! It wasn’t from exercise or eating the right food. Samson got his strength from the Lord. God made Samson strong because he had a very important job to do, and I’ll tell you all about that soon. However, before we go any further, who wants to post this week’s puzzle piece on our wall?”



EVERY FEW WEEKS, USE THE PUZZLE PIECES TO REMIND THE CHILDREN THAT NO MATTER WHAT WE’RE LEARNING FROM GOD’S WORD, THESE LESSONS ARE ALWAYS ABOUT THE LORD.

TRANSITION: Say, “Do you know what time it is? Game time! Game time!”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Sit Down If...* Activity Page (1 per class) |

Say, “We’re going to play a game called *Sit Down If...* This isn’t a game about winning or losing. However, we just might learn some new things about each other. Let’s get started!”

GAME GOAL: To be the last person standing.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Begin by having everyone stand.
2. Then, say, “Sit Down If...” followed by one of the phrases from the *Sit Down If...* Activity Page. (Feel free to add your own commands.)
3. Explain to the children that if the phrase describes them, they will sit down until the end of the round.
4. Play until there is only one child standing.



IF ONE PHRASE CAUSES A HIGH NUMBER OF CHILDREN TO SIT DOWN AT ONCE, THROW IN A "STAND UP IF..." COMMAND TO PULL SOME OF THE CLASS BACK INTO THAT ROUND.

TRANSITION: Say, "I love that we learned lots of new and interesting things about one another by playing that game. Now, we're going to learn about Samson, and he was also very unique. God called him to live differently than everyone else. Are you ready to hear our story? Me too!"

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, "It's time to read from God's Word! We're going to hear about a time when God was preparing to rescue His people from their enemies. To do that, He would give a man and his wife a baby who would grow into a leader with extraordinary strength. That baby's name was Samson, and today we get to hear how his story starts. Listen closely, and by the end, I want you to tell me what God was going to give this boy the strength to do." Read the following verses from Judges 13:1-25 (ICB).

¹ Again the people of Israel did what the Lord said was wrong. So he let the Philistines rule over them for 40 years.

² There was a man named Manoah...He had a wife, but she could not have children.

³ The angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife. He said, "You have not been able to have children. But you will become pregnant and have a son! ⁴ Don't drink wine or beer. Don't eat anything that is unclean. ⁵ You will become pregnant and have a son. You must never cut his hair because he will be a Nazirite. He will be given to God from birth. He will begin the work of saving Israel from the power of the Philistines."

⁶ Then Manoah's wife went to him and told him what had happened. She said, "A man from God came to me. He looked like an angel from God. His appearance was frightening..."

⁸ Then Manoah said a prayer to the Lord: "Lord, I beg you to let the man of God come to us again..."

⁹ God heard Manoah's prayer. The angel of God came to Manoah's wife again... ¹⁰ So she ran to tell him, "He is here! The man who appeared to me the other day is here!"

¹¹ Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, "Are you the man who spoke to my wife?" The man said, "I am."

¹² So Manoah asked, "When what you say happens, what kind of life should the boy live? What should he do?"

¹³ The angel of the Lord said, "Your wife must do everything I told her to do..."

¹⁹ Then Manoah sacrificed a young goat on a rock. He also offered some grain as a

gift to the Lord. The Lord did an amazing thing. Manoah and his wife watched what happened. ²⁰ The flames went up to the sky from the altar. As the fire burned, the angel of the Lord went up to heaven in the fire! When Manoah and his wife saw that, they bowed facedown on the ground...

²⁴ So the woman gave birth to a boy. She named him Samson. Samson grew, and the Lord blessed him. ²⁵ The Spirit of the Lord began to work in Samson...



GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO BE "SEPARATE," AND ONE OF THE WAYS WE SEE THAT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IS THROUGH THE DIETARY LAWS OF THE ISRAELITES. THE LORD DESIGNATED SOME ANIMALS AS "CLEAN" AND OTHERS AS "UNCLEAN." YOUR KIDS MAY BE CURIOUS ABOUT WHICH ANIMALS MANOAH'S WIFE COULD AND COULDN'T EAT. UNCLEAN ANIMALS INCLUDED PIGS, HORSES, AND SHELLFISH. WE NO LONGER HAVE TO ABIDE BY THOSE SAME RESTRICTIONS. (SEE ACTS 10-11.) INSTEAD, WE ARE SET APART BY OUR SPIRITUAL STANDING IN CHRIST.

Say, "Wow! What a story. God was giving Manoah and his wife a baby! What an incredible gift for this couple. But Samson would not be an ordinary baby."

Ask, "What was God's unique plan for Samson's life? [Wait for responses.] That's right! He was going to grow into a leader who would 'begin the work of saving Israel from the Philistines.' Samson had a big purpose in his life and God gave him the strength to do it! God is always working for the good of His people. We have such a loving God.

"Even before Samson was born, God had a particular set of instructions for his mother. Did you hear what some of those commands were? Right! (1) She could not have any wine or strong drink, (2) She could never cut Samson's hair, and (3) She could not eat unclean animals. [See the 'Teachable Moment.']

"These seem like strange instructions, don't they? Does anyone want to guess why this mother had to follow such specific rules?

"God was setting Samson apart from other children and showing Samson's community that this boy was called for a special purpose. His life would remind others that God was providing Samson's strength."

JOINING TO JESUS

Say, "Perhaps you read the story of Manoah and his wife and thought it sounded like Mary and Joseph's, complete with an angelic visitation and prophecy of the great work this baby would accomplish. Often in Scripture, God sent a 'hero' to the Israelites [such as Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and David]. Despite their successes, though, all of these individuals show us that even the best of us cannot outrun sin. Their stories point us to the only good and perfect King, Jesus, who provides eternal freedom from all our enemies, including ourselves."

TRANSITION: Say, "Our God is amazing! There are so many things we could discuss about this story, but the most important thing I want you to remember is that **God gives His people strength!**"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Are you ready to talk about the story?"

1. Who gives His people strength?

Response: **God gives His people strength.**

2. What unique plan did God have for Samson?

Response: God would make Samson the leader who would free His people from their enemies, the Philistines.

3. What did God mean when he said Samson would be a Nazarite?

Response: Nazarites were people who made special promises to separate themselves from others and follow God completely. Nazarites did not cut their hair, drink wine or other strong drinks, or touch unclean animals.

4. How did Manoah and his wife know their visitor was an angel?

Response: Answers will vary. However, they should include the angel's frightening appearance and that Manoah and his wife saw the angel go up to heaven in a fire.

5. Who is the hero in this story?

Response: God is the hero, and He is the hero of the entire Bible! God was the one who gave this child to Manoah and his wife, and the Lord made Samson strong.

6. Does this story remind you of anyone else's story?

Response: Answers will vary. However, help the children see the similarities and differences between Samson and Jesus. (See "Joining to Jesus.")

7. What do we learn about God from our story?

Response: **God gives His people strength.** God always has a plan to take care of His people. God loves us. Nothing is too hard for God, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Today's story is a great reminder that **God gives His people strength.**"

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Sentence Strips (1 per child) | Black Construction Paper (2 per child) | Scissors | Glue Sticks | Staplers |



SENTENCE STRIPS ARE 24" X 3" PIECES OF PAPER. THE WEEK BEFORE, PURCHASE THEM ON AMAZON, WALMART.COM, AND ONLINE AT OTHER OFFICE SUPPLY STORES.

Say, "Today, we are going to create a craft to remind us that God had a special plan for Samson. The Lord was setting Samson apart as a Nazarite, which meant that Samson should never cut his hair. So, we're going to create our own 'Samson wigs.' Let's get to it!"

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Staple the sentence strip to fit each child's head.
2. Have the children cut strips in their black construction paper, leaving 1 inch at the top. (The more strips they cut, the more hair they will have.)

3. Next, the kids should glue the top 1-inch portion of their “hair” to the top of the sentence strip. Instruct them to leave 1/3 of the sentence strip open in the front so their faces will show through.

TRANSITION: Say, “This is our first lesson about Samson, and I can’t wait to see what happens next for him. However, I know one thing for sure. His story is going to teach us so much about how **God gives His people strength!**”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | White Paper (optional) | Tape (optional) |

Say, “Samson’s story teaches us that **God gives His people strength**. Why did God give him strength? Right! Because the Lord had a special job for Samson. I hope you will never forget that just like Samson, our strength comes from the Lord. This month’s memory verse is going to help us remember this truth. Listen as I say this verse and watch my hand motions closely. Then, in a moment, you can do it with me.”

“Finally, be strong (show muscles) in the Lord (make an “L” with your pointer finger and thumb, bring it across your body from your shoulder to your waist) and in his (point to heaven) great power (show muscles).”
Ephesians 6:10 (hold your hands out like a book)

CHALLENGE: To help children learn the verse, play *Organize My Friends*. Before class, write words (or phrases) from the memory verse on separate pieces of paper. Then, tape each sheet of paper to a child’s back. Have those children stand in front of the group. The remaining children will put the verse in the correct order by arranging their friends from first to last.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “**God gives His people strength!** Let’s take time to pray that God will give us strength. He can help us with things we could never do without Him, like be brave when we’re afraid, share our faith, stand up for God, obey our parents, and be kind to those who are mean to us. How can I pray for you today?”



SHARE A TIME YOU HAVE NEEDED EXTRA STRENGTH FROM GOD. AND THEN PRAY, PRAY, PRAY OVER YOUR KIDS! THEY NEED STRENGTH AS MUCH AS ADULTS DO!

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Holy Spirit, give us strength to do the things that will bring You glory. Today, please make (insert child’s name) strong to (insert each child’s request). Thank You for loving and helping us. I’m so glad that when we are weak, You are strong. Amen.”

RELEASE —

If you have extra time, reinforce this month’s theme by singing your worship songs. You can also play *Simon Says* and talk about how important it was for Samson’s family to listen to and obey God’s commands. Finally, give the parents (and guardians) their copy of this unit’s downloadable Parent Guide.



SIT DOWN IF...

- 1) ...you are wearing jeans.
- 2) ...you didn't brush your teeth this morning.
- 3) ...you are the oldest child in your family.
- 4) ...you are the youngest child in your family.
- 5) ...you own a dog.
- 6) ...you don't have any pets.
- 7) ...you have seen the ocean.
- 8) ...you have never been on an airplane.
- 9) ...you have ridden a roller coaster.
- 10) ...you have always lived in the same house.
- 11) ...you can roll your tongue.
- 12) ...you have ever been camping.
- 13) ...you are an only child.
- 14) ...you like pancakes better than waffles.
- 15) ...you like chocolate ice cream better than vanilla.
- 16) ...you have blonde hair.
- 17) ...you have brown eyes.
- 18) ...you are not wearing socks.
- 19) ...you are wearing shoes with laces.
- 20) ...you have broken a bone.
- 21) ...your birthday is in December.
- 22) ...you don't like broccoli.
- 23) ...your family drives a mini-van.
- 24) ...you played video games this morning.
- 25) ...you ate pizza this week.

STRONG

GOD GIVES SAMSON STRENGTH



SAMSON AND THE LION

BIBLE PASSAGE

Judges 13:24-25, 14:5-6 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God gives His people strength.

FOCUS VERSE

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his great power.” Ephesians 6:10

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Animal Prints* Activity Page | *Animal Names* Activity Page | *Answer Key* Activity Page | *God is My Strength* Activity Page | White Cardstock Paper | Scissors | Markers or Crayons | Miscellaneous Craft Supplies (optional) |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Who is the strongest person you know? Tell me about them.
- Do you think you are strong? Why or why not?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Last month, we saw that God gives us the courage to bravely follow Him. This month, we’ll continue down a similar path as we learn about God’s strength and power from the story of Samson. We’ll find that because the Lord is mighty, we can follow Him wherever He leads. Nothing and no one is more powerful than He is. Let’s worship the Lord together.” Begin this week’s worship by reading Psalm 93 aloud. Then, continue to sing songs that reinforce the theme. Here are the ones we are recommending this month:

1. “Super Strong God” by *Hillsong Kids*
2. “What a Mighty God We Serve” by *Listener Kids*
3. “Jesus” by *Chris Tomlin*

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather your class for prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, You are great and powerful. Thank You for being our strength. We love You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “Today we’re continuing our new series of lessons called *Strong*. What do you think of when you hear that word? Do you know someone who is particularly strong? Or do you think of a tall mountain or a powerful animal? Well, when we say *strong*, we are talking about the power of God. All month we’ll be learning about God’s strength from the life of a special Old Testament judge—Samson. Who is ready to learn about God’s power? Great! Let’s hang up this week’s puzzle piece.”

TRANSITION: Say, “Time to play a game!”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Animal Prints* Activity Page (1 per group) | *Animal Names* Activity Page (1 per group) | *Answer Key* Activity Page|

Say, “In today’s story, we will be talking about a ferocious [dangerous] animal. To get us thinking, let’s look at some different paw prints and find the dangerous animal that matches them!”

GAME GOAL: To work together to pair the pawprint with its matching animal.



BEFORE CLASS, CUT ONE SET OF CARDS FROM THE *ANIMAL PRINTS* ACTIVITY PAGE AND ONE SET OF CARDS FROM THE *ANIMAL NAMES* ACTIVITY PAGE FOR EACH GROUP.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Divide your class into four groups and give each group one set of *Animal Prints* Cards and one set of *Animals Names* Cards to match up.
2. When you say “go,” give each team three minutes to examine the prints and match them with the correct animals. Once the time is up, check everyone’s work and give the class the right answers.

MODIFICATION: To extend the game, if one or more groups do not get the correct answers on the first try, continue to play and see which group can figure out their mistakes first. This game can also be played as a whole group if you want to avoid competition.

TRANSITION: Say, “Good job with today’s game! Can anyone guess which ferocious animal we will be learning about today? Alright, it is time to find out!”

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Samson’s story is such a great one! From his life, we see how powerful God is, and you know what? God never changes! [See Malachi 3:6 and Hebrews 18:18.] The mighty God who gave Samson strength can meet all of our needs too. So, are you ready to hear about God, Samson, and a ferocious animal? I am! Let’s start in Judges 13:24-25” Read Judges 13:24-25 and 14:5-6 (ICB).

²⁴ So the woman gave birth to a boy. She named him Samson. Samson grew, and the Lord blessed him. ²⁵ The Spirit of the Lord began to work in Samson...

Say, “The story gets very interesting in the next chapter.” Read 14:5-6 (ICB).

⁵ Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah. They went as far as the vineyard near there. Suddenly, a young lion came roaring toward Samson! ⁶ The Spirit of the Lord entered Samson with great power. Samson tore the lion apart with his bare hands. For him it was as easy as tearing apart a young goat.

Say, “Wow! God gave Samson strength and **God gives His people strength!**”



THIS IS AN EXCITING STORY AND IT'S EASY FOR THE DISCUSSION TO BECOME CENTERED AROUND SAMSON KILLING THE LION. HELP THE CHILDREN SEE THESE VERSES AS A TESTIMONY OF THE POWER OF GOD.

Ask, “Could Samson have torn the lion apart without the Lord’s strength? [Wait for responses.] No! Lions are dangerous, powerful, and ferocious. Lions are usually the ones tearing things apart, but not in this story! The lion came to attack Samson, but God empowered Samson to defeat it so it would not harm his parents or him! Isn’t that incredible?”

TRANSITION: Say, “What a powerful God we serve! He gives us the courage to obey Him and do things we could never do without Him. I’m so grateful **God gives His people strength.**”

JOINING TO JESUS

Say, “In Scripture, lions are depicted as symbols of strength and victory. This reinforces the truth that Samson’s conquest is miraculous. However, there is a good Lion who will never be conquered. Revelation 5:5 calls Jesus the ‘Lion of Judah,’ and He is the only eternal, omnipotent, and perfect King.” As you discuss Samson’s story with the kids in your class, continually point to Christ – the Lion of Judah.

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, “I need everyone’s help to talk about what we learned!”



KIDS LOVE TO SHOW HOW MUCH THEY KNOW. USE THE “DISCUSS” TIME TO DEEPEN STORY COMPREHENSION AND ENGAGEMENT.

1. Who gives His people strength?

Response: **God gives His people strength.**

2. Why do you think God gave Samson supernatural strength?

Response: God was protecting Samson and his parents from the fierce lion by giving him supernatural strength.

3. Does that mean God will give you the strength to kill a lion?

Response: No, this story is not teaching us that God regularly gives His people the ability to

kill animals. This story is about a miracle God does in Samson's life, and miracles are supernatural, out-of-the-ordinary things. (Something isn't a miracle if it happens all the time.) This story shows how strong and mighty God is. It also reminds us that when we follow Him, He can do incredible things through us that we could never do on our own.

4. What are some things God gives His people the power to do?

Response: God gives us the power to obey Him. He helps us be joyful when things around us are sad and enables us to be kind to our enemies. Sometimes He even does miraculous things through us. For example, the Bible tells us to pray for those who are sick. Did you know that there are times when God miraculously heals people through our prayers?

5. When we are in trouble, who can we go to for strength?

Response: We can always go to God for strength.

6. What do we learn about God from our story?

Response: **God gives His people strength.** There is no one more powerful than God. God loves us and takes care of us. God is mighty, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Samson is powerful because the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and made him strong."

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *God is My Strength* Activity Page | White Cardstock Paper (1 per child) | Scissors | Markers or Crayons | Miscellaneous Craft Supplies (optional) |

Say, "Today, we are going to create a craft to remind us that God gives us strength. Who is ready to get started?"



BEFORE CLASS, MAKE ONE COPY PER CHILD OF THE *GOD IS MY STRENGTH* ACTIVITY PAGE ON CARDSTOCK PAPER.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *God is My Strength* Activity Page, scissors, and markers or crayons.
2. Make other craft supplies (glitter, stickers, ribbon, etc.) available to the class (optional).
3. The class can color, decorate and cut out their crafts.
4. Once everyone has completed their craft, go around and ask each child to describe one way they need God to give them strength.

TRANSITION: Say, "It is true, our mighty **God gives His people strength!** Now, you can use your craft to tell someone about our strong God!"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month's memory verse reminds us that **God is the one who gives us strength.** Let's practice our verse together so we never forget the incredible truth we have learned today.

“Finally, be strong (*show muscles*) **in the Lord** (*make an “L” with your pointer finger and thumb, bring it across your body from your shoulder to your waist*) **and in his** (*point to heaven*) **great power** (*show muscles*).”
Ephesians 6:10 (*hold your hands out like a book*)

CHALLENGE: Engage your kids in the memory verse by asking a few questions:

1. Who gives us strength?
2. How does God make His people strong?

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “God is all-powerful, and He fills us with the strength we need! Isn’t that great news? Today, and every day, ask the Holy Spirit to provide you with the power to love and serve the Lord. If you believe in God and have accepted Him as your Savior, then you can experience the strength that only comes from Him.



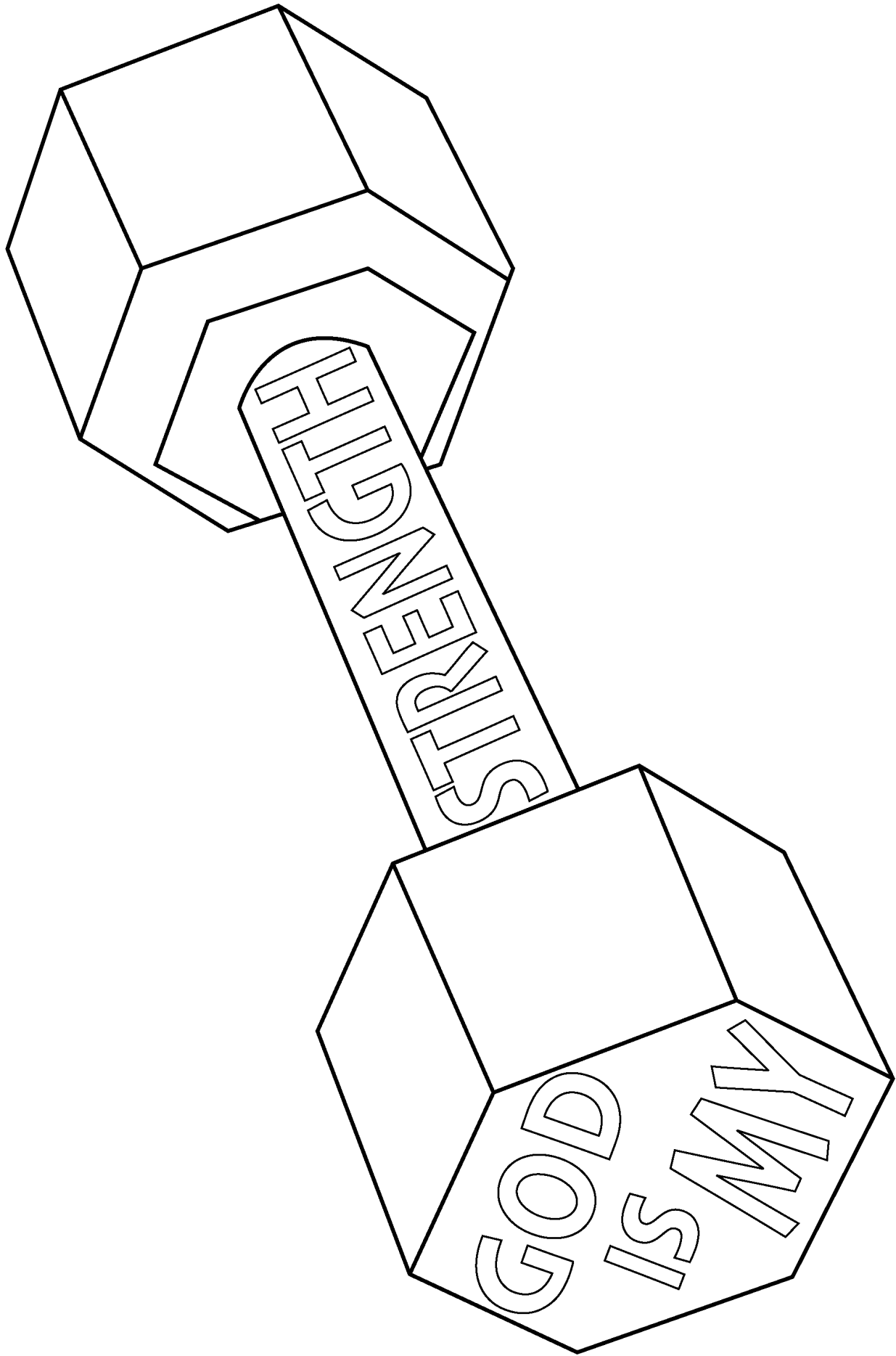
REGULARLY OFFER CHILDREN THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE CHRIST AS SAVIOR. GIVE THEM WORDS TO PRAY AND ASK THEM TO TELL YOU (PUBLICALLY OR PRIVATELY) IF THEY MAKE A COMMITMENT TO JESUS SO YOU CAN CELEBRATE AND FOLLOW UP WITH THEM.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Holy Spirit, we need Your supernatural power! We need the strength that only comes from You. Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your Spirit to be with us and help us. Thank You for stories like Samson’s that remind us that You are with us. In Jesus’ name, Amen!”*

RELEASE —

If there is extra time before parents arrive, reinforce this month’s theme by singing together. Check out YouTube for *LoveHopeCity’s* version of “What a Mighty God We Serve,” with motions you can do with the children.





ANSWER KEY



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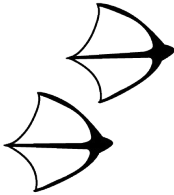
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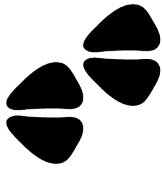
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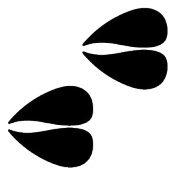
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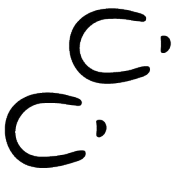
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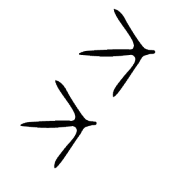
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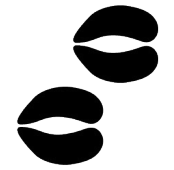
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HORSE



TURKEY



COW



RABBIT



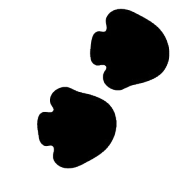
FOX



BEAR



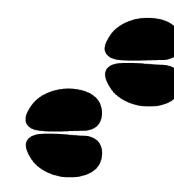
MOUSE



RHINO



PENGUIN



CAMEL



DEER



RACCOON



WOLF



SQUIRREL



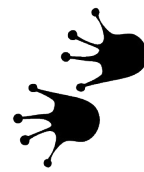
HEDGEHOG



GORILLA



BEAVER



FROG



LION



LEMUR



GIRAFFE

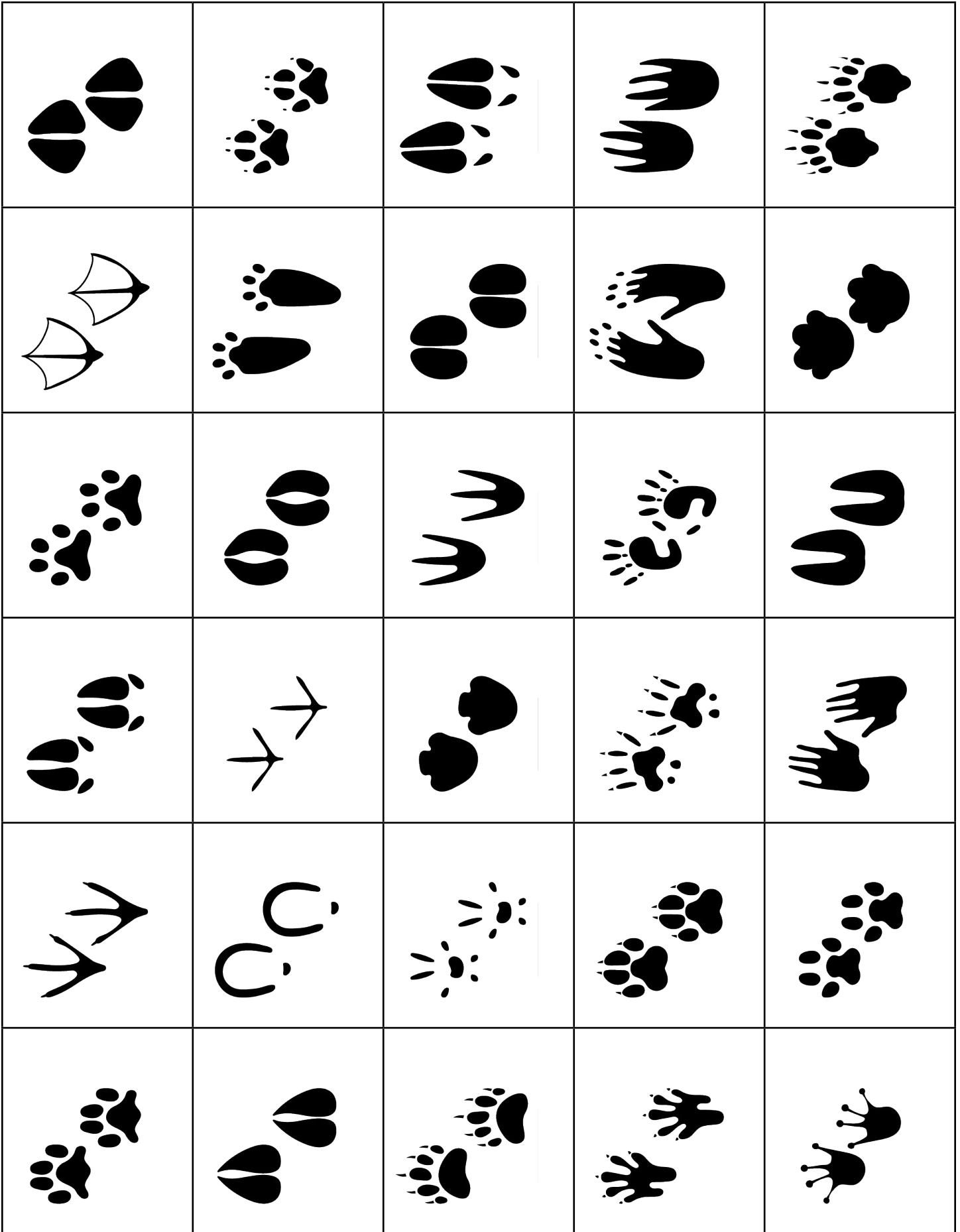


HIPPO



GRIZZLY BEAR

Grizzly bear	Cat	Mouse	Deer	Pig	Lemur
Rhino	Cow	Beaver	Sheep	Dog	Hen
Giraffe	Fox	Donkey	Gorilla	Rabbit	Wolf
Bear	Raccoon	Hippo	Penguin	Camel	Duck
Lion	Frog	Hedgehog	Turkey	Horse	Squirrel



STRONG

GOD GIVES SAMSON STRENGTH



SAMSON BREAKS THE ROPES

BIBLE PASSAGE

Judges 15:8-15 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God gives His people strength.

FOCUS VERSE

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his great power.” Ephesians 6:10

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Rope | *Samson's Free Activity Page* | White Cardstock Paper | Scissors | String Pieces | Glue Sticks | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your favorite thing to do in PE or at recess?
- Who is your favorite superhero?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “The Holy Spirit is faithful to give us strength when we need it most. Sometimes He gives us physical strength, but most often, the Holy Spirit gives us strength to do hard things like telling the truth or standing up for someone who is being mistreated. Before we sing, let’s take turns thanking God for some of the ways He makes us strong.” Choose songs that will help the children focus on this month’s theme. Here are some of our favorites:

1. “Super Strong God” by *Hillsong Kids*
2. “What a Mighty God We Serve” by *Listener Kids*
3. “Jesus” by *Chris Tomlin*

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the children for prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, we are so grateful for Your love and Your power. You do more for us than we could ever ask, think, or imagine. Thank You for being a good, good Father. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”



GIVE THE CHILDREN OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED IN THE PRAYER TIME. THEY CAN OFFER REQUESTS, PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER, OR LEAD IN THE LORD’S PRAYER. TEACH THEM THAT PRAYER IS SIMPLY TALKING TO GOD.

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “We are officially on our third week of our lessons called *Strong*. No one is more mighty, powerful, or strong than our God, and because He loves us, He gives us strength to follow Him. Now, I can’t wait to share another story about how God, the Holy Spirit, gave Samson incredible strength. Today’s story is so exciting! First, though, who would like to post this week’s puzzle piece?” Place this week’s puzzle piece on the wall.

TRANSITION: Say, “Are you ready to play a game before we read today’s story?”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Rope (1 per class) |

Say, “Today’s game gives us a hint at our lesson, and that hint is that both have something to do with a rope. First, let me explain the activity.”

GAME GOAL: To jump over the “helicopter blades” (or the rope) while it is being spun in a circle.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Choose one person to be the helicopter, and everyone else will be jumpers.
2. Give the “helicopter” a long rope (about eight feet long) and tell that person to stand in the middle of the room and spin around as they hold one side of the rope near the ground. (The rope dragging the ground will resemble helicopter blades.)
3. While the rope is spinning, everyone else will stand around the “helicopter” at a distance of about five feet. Each person will jump over the rope when it gets by their feet.
4. If the “helicopter blades” touch a “jumper,” they are out of that round.
5. The last child remaining in each round wins.

NOTE: If the children don’t have the motor skills to be the “helicopter,” you or another adult or teenager can take on that role.

TRANSITION: Say, “Are you wondering why we played this game? Well, we have a super interesting story, and it involves some rope. Hmmm... are you confused? Well, that’s ok because it’s time to dive in right now.”

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, “**God gives His people strength**, and this includes Samson! Samson was a mighty man, but all of his strength came from God! I want you to listen about a time when the Lord gave Samson supernatural strength. When you hear it, give me a thumbs-up.” Read Judges 15:8-15 (ICB).

⁸ **Samson attacked the Philistines and killed many of them. Then he went down and stayed in a cave. It was in the rock of Etam.**

⁹ Then the Philistines went up and camped in the land of Judah. They stopped near a place named Lehi. ¹⁰ The men of Judah asked them, “Why have you come here to fight us?”

They answered, “We have come to make Samson our prisoner. We want to pay him back for what he did to our people.”

¹¹ Then 3,000 men of Judah went to the cave in the rock of Etam. They said to Samson, “What have you done to us? Don’t you know that the Philistines rule over us?” Samson answered, “I only paid them back for what they did to me!”

¹² Then they said to him, “We have come to tie you up. We will give you to the Philistines.” Samson said to them, “Promise me you will not hurt me yourselves.”

¹³ The men from Judah said, “We agree. We will just tie you up and give you to the Philistines. We will not kill you.” So they tied Samson with two new ropes. Then they led him up from the cave in the rock. ¹⁴ When Samson came to the place named Lehi, the Philistines came to meet him. They were shouting for joy. Then the Spirit of the Lord entered Samson and gave him great power. The ropes on him became weak like strings that had been burned. They fell off his hands! ¹⁵ Samson found a jawbone of a donkey that had just died. He took it and killed 1,000 men with it!

Say, “**God gives His people strength.** Right when Samson needed help, God gave Him all that he needed. The Philistines were enemies of God’s people, and they killed some of Samson’s family, including his wife. So Samson retaliated, attacking and destroying many of the Philistine men. When the rest of these people heard what had happened, they went to Samson’s people, ready for battle. Instead of defending Samson and his family, Samson’s own people captured him and gave him to the Philistines, who were planning to kill him. However, God gave Samson the strength to escape. Samson took a donkey’s jawbone and defeated 1000 men with it. Isn’t that incredible?!”

Ask, “What is most amazing about that story to you? How do we know Samson’s strength came from God? [Wait for responses.] A special line from the Bible passage we read said, ‘Then the Spirit of the Lord entered Samson and gave him great power’ (v. 14). Samson was able to break the ropes because the Holy Spirit gave him strength. Samson’s ropes were no match for God’s strength. Everything is easy for God [Jeremiah 32:27]. I know Samson was grateful for God’s help. When we are weak, He is strong!”

TRANSITION: Say, “Now, I want to hear what you have to say about our story.”

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Are you ready to talk about the story?”

1. Who gives His people strength?

Response: **God gives His people strength.**

2. Why do you think God gave Samson supernatural strength?

Response: God loved Samson and was rescuing him from the evil Philistines.

3. What did the Holy Spirit help Samson do in this story?

Response: The Holy Spirit enabled Samson to break free from the ropes and overpower 1,000 wicked men.

4. Was the breaking of the ropes hard for God?

Response: No. The passage said that the ropes became “weak like strings that had been burned.”

5. How is human strength different from the Holy Spirit’s strength?

Response: Answers will vary.

6. When we need strength and help, where should we go first?

Response: We should always go to God first. He is powerful, strong, and loving, and **He gives His people strength.**

7. What do we learn about God from our story?

Response: **God gives His people strength.** God loves us. God is mighty and powerful. Nothing is too hard for God, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “Samson was able to defeat his enemies because the Lord is all-powerful, and He was with Samson. Aren’t you glad we serve such a strong and mighty God?”

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Samson’s Free Activity Page* | White Cardstock Paper (1 per child) | Scissors | String Pieces (2, 3” pieces per child) | Glue Sticks | Markers or Crayons |

Say, “Today, we are going to create a craft to remind us that the Holy Spirit gave Samson supernatural strength to break free from thick ropes and defeat his enemies.”



BEFORE CLASS, MAKE ONE COPY OF THE *SAMSON’S FREE ACTIVITY PAGE* ON THE WHITE CARDSTOCK PAPER FOR EACH CHILD.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Samson’s Free Activity Page* and markers or crayons.
2. Once they have finished coloring, instruct the kids to cut out their Samson image.
3. Finally, give every child two pieces of string to glue around each of Samson’s wrists. (Do not connect the pieces of string between Samson’s wrists; we want to show that the Holy Spirit’s power freed Samson.)

TRANSITION: Say, “It is true, **God gives His people strength!** Supernatural strength from the Lord helped Samson easily break the ropes around his wrists. Wow!”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “Does anyone remember the verse we are learning this month? Great! It’s from Ephesians 6:10, and I love how it reminds us that we don’t have to rely on our own strength; as Christians, our strength comes from God. Let’s hear it again and practice saying it together.”

“Finally, be strong (*show muscles*) **in the Lord** (*make and “L” with your pointer finger and thumb, bring it across your body from your shoulder to your waist*) **and in his** (*point to heaven*) **great power** (*show muscles*).”
Ephesians 6:10 (*hold your hands out like a book*)

CHALLENGE: Give each child a chance to come up with their own actions to the memory verse.



WHEN KIDS CREATE THEIR OWN MOVES, THEY WILL BETTER REMEMBER THE WORDS.

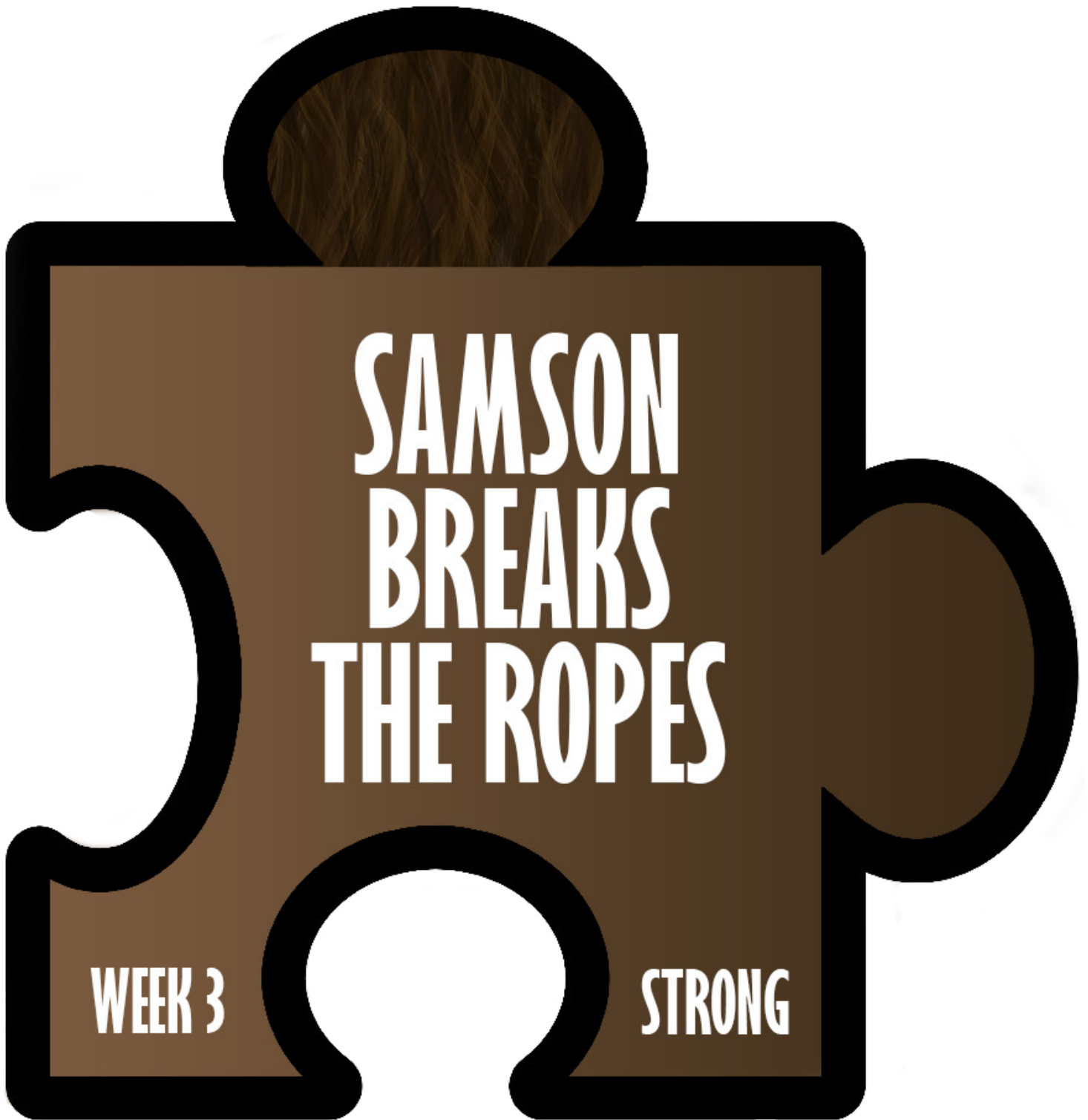
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

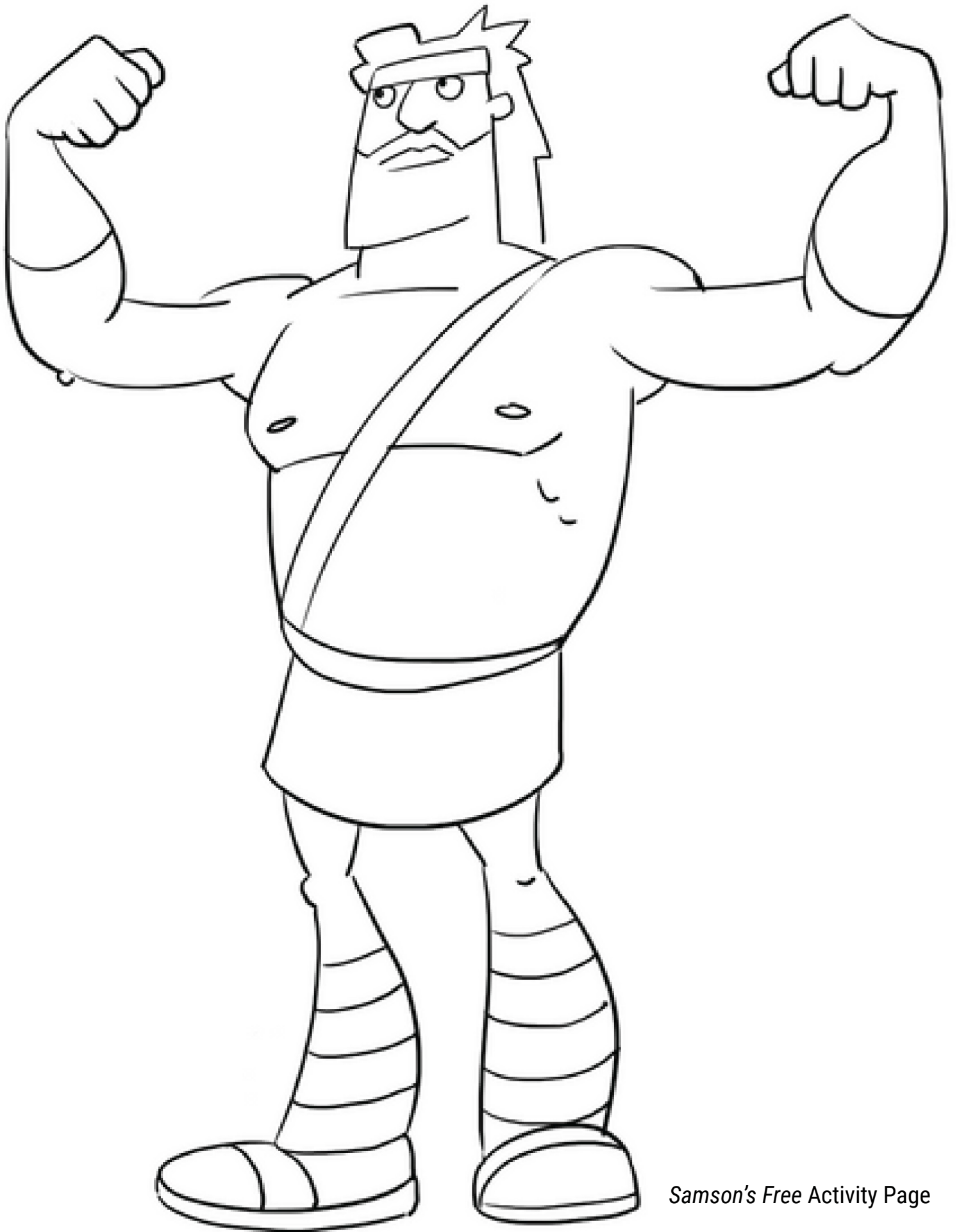
Say, **“God gives His people strength.** In each lesson this month, we have seen the Lord provide Samson with all the strength he needed. Only the Holy Spirit can fill His people with supernatural power like we read about in God’s Word. There is nothing too hard for the Lord [Genesis 18:14].”

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Holy Spirit, make us strong in You. Remind us that we need You for everything and that we can come to You, our loving Father, with all of our needs. Thank You, Lord! Amen.”*

RELEASE —

Use the remainder of the time to take turns sharing about times when God has given you strength.





STRONG

GOD GIVES SAMSON STRENGTH



SAMSON DESTROYS A TEMPLE

BIBLE PASSAGE

Judges 16:21-23, 25-30 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God gives His people strength.

FOCUS VERSE

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his great power.” Ephesians 6:10

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Samson Destroys a Temple* Activity Page | Markers or Crayons | Scissors | Glue | Red Construction Paper |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Why do you think people go to church?
- What is your favorite thing to do at church?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

The focus of this unit is two-fold. First, we want children to recognize the overwhelming power of God. He is the only omnipotent (all-powerful) being ever to exist, and the more we understand and embrace that truth, the more we will worship and rely on Him. Secondly, we want children to see that all our strength comes from Him. We never outgrow the simple truth of “Jesus Loves Me.” We are weak, but He is strong. As you wrap up this unit, emphasize both of those truths. Celebrate the strength of the Lord and worship Him for loving us enough to empower us to live lives that bring glory to Him.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Ask the children if they have needs they'd like you to pray for, and encourage them to pray for one another.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Lord, we need Your strength. Empower us to be like You so that we can bring You glory. Even today, give us the power to understand Your Word. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This is the fourth and final week of our *Strong* lessons. What man from the Bible have we read about this month? Yes, we’ve learned about Samson! And who is the hero of our lessons?”

Right, God is always the hero. While Samson was physically strong, it was only because of God that Samson could do powerful things. Now, who remembers some of the things Samson did [with God's help]?" Wait for responses.

Say, "We have one more story to tell about Samson, the most surprising story of all. Who is ready to hear it? Great! Let's start by posting our new puzzle piece on the wall."

TRANSITION: Say, "Let's play a quick game before we read God's story."

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Has anyone ever heard the song 'London's Bridge is Falling Down?' Great! Well, we are going to use that song in today's game, except we are going to change the words to go with today's story. Two people will hold their arms up like a 'temple' [instead of a like a 'bridge'], and everyone else will travel under their arms. If you're caught under the 'temple' at the end of the song, you're out for that round. Are you ready to try it? Let me show you how."

GAME GOAL: To be the last one standing at the end of the song.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Choose two people to hold each other's hands over their heads, making an opening between both of them for the kids to enter. (This is much like the traditional set up for the "London's Bridge is Falling Down" game.)
2. Everyone else will be travelers trying to make their way through the "temple" before it falls.
3. Change the words of the "London's Bridge" song to: "The giant temple is falling down, falling down, falling down. The giant temple is falling down, crumble, crumble, crumble!" If anyone is under the two people's arms when you say the last word, they are out.

TRANSITION: Say, "If you are curious about why we changed today's song lyrics, you are about to find out! Let's get ready to hear this week's story from God's Word."

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, "In today's story, you're going to hear about some people called the Philistines. The Philistines were cruel to God's chosen people—the Israelites. They killed many of the Israelites and made fun of God. So, God helped Samson defeat the wicked Philistines. Let's see how the Holy Spirit gave Samson supernatural strength to fight God's enemies." Read Judges 16:21-23, 25-30 (ICB).

²¹ Then the Philistines captured Samson. They tore out his eyes. And they took him down to Gaza. They put bronze chains on him. They put him in prison and made him grind grain. ²² But his hair began to grow again.

²³ The kings of the Philistines gathered to celebrate. They were going to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon. They said, "Our god has given us Samson our enemy."

...²⁵ The [Philistine] people were having a good time at the celebration. They said, "Bring Samson out to perform for us." So they brought Samson from the prison. He performed for them. They made him stand between the pillars of the temple of Dagon [a fake God].²⁶ A servant was holding his hand. Samson said to him, "Let me feel the pillars that hold up the temple. I want to lean against them."²⁷ Now the temple was full of men and women. All the kings of the Philistines were there. There were about 3,000 men and women on the roof. They watched Samson perform.²⁸ Then Samson prayed to the Lord. He said, "Lord God, remember me. God, please give me strength one more time. Let me pay these Philistines back for putting out my two eyes!"²⁹ Then Samson held the two center pillars of the temple. These two pillars supported the whole temple. He braced himself between the two pillars. His right hand was on one, and his left hand was on the other.³⁰ Samson said, "Let me die with these Philistines!" Then he pushed as hard as he could. And the temple fell on the kings and all the people in it...

Say, "God gave Samson incredible, supernatural strength, didn't He?"

Ask, "What did the Lord help Samson do to the wicked Philistines? [Wait for responses.] Samson brought down a whole temple filled with wicked people because God gave him strength. It didn't matter that Samson was a prisoner or blind; when Samson cried out to God, God answered him by giving him the strength to kill thousands of His enemies. God's strength cannot be compared to anyone else's. His power is stronger than anyone or anything—even a giant building holding thousands of people."

TRANSITION: Say, "God gives His people strength. He is so powerful and mighty! There is nothing He cannot do."

JOINING TO JESUS

Although God used Samson in remarkable ways, He did so in spite of Samson, not because he deserved it. Among other things, Samson was arrogant, greedy, and rebellious. Samson's life should remind us of the magnificent grace of God. No matter how hard he tried, Samson could not save Himself, and neither can we. By the end of the story, we see a man broken by sin whose last act involves calling out to God for help. We are like Samson; we need a gracious God to rescue us from ourselves. That Savior is Jesus.

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Are you ready to talk about the story?"

1. Who gives His people strength?

Response: **God gives His people strength.**

2. What did God help Samson to do in this story?

Response: The Lord filled Samson with enough strength to destroy a whole temple.

3. Samson needed strength to save God's people from the evil Philistines, and that was a special

job. Is there something big you think God is calling you to do?

Response: Answers will vary.

4. What do you think you'll remember most about today's story?

Response: Answers will vary.

5. What is the difference between human strength and God's strength?

Response: Human strength can be built by going to the gym and exercising, but God gives His people power through the Holy Spirit. God's strength helps us stand up for Him and obey Him.

6. What do we learn about God from our story?

Response: **God gives His people strength.** God loves us. Nothing is too hard for God. God hears our prayers, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Samson was strong because of the Lord. Aren't you grateful **God gives His people strength?**"

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Samson Destroys a Temple* Activity Page (1 per child) | Markers or Crayons | Scissors | Glue | Red Construction Paper (1 per child) |

Say, "Do you remember how God gave Samson the strength to destroy his enemies' temple? Today, we will be creating a picture to remind us of God's power at work in Samson."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Samson Destroys a Temple* Activity Page and access to the other craft supplies.
2. Have the children color the columns and the Samson figure. (Make sure they draw patches over Samson's eyes!)
3. Then, they should cut out the images and glue them on the red construction paper in a way that looks like Samson is pushing the columns down.
4. Finally, have the children write: "God gives Samson strength" at the top of their page.

CHALLENGE: If you prefer to let your children be more creative, have them use Play-Doh or Legos to create this same scene.

TRANSITION: Say, "It is true, **God gives His people strength!**"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Today is the final time we will practice this month's memory verse. Remember, it is all about how God is the source of our strength."

"Finally, be strong (*show muscles*) **in the Lord** (*make an "L" with your pointer finger and thumb, bring it across your body from your shoulder to your waist*) **and in his** (*point to heaven*) **great power** (*show muscles*)."
Ephesians 6:10 (*hold your hands out like a book*)



KIDS WILL REMEMBER THE VERSE BETTER IF IT IS REPEATED OFTEN, SO FIND WAYS TO INCORPORATE IT THROUGHOUT THE LESSON.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, **“God gives His people strength.** I have loved talking about our amazing God over these past four weeks, and Samson is a great person to show us how God gives His people the strength to do things we could never do on our own. There are no limits to God’s great power.”

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, make us strong so we can love You and serve You with our whole hearts. May we never forget that You love us, hear our prayers, and give us everything we need. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

RELEASE —

If you have extra time, replay the Engage game, sing this month’s songs again, or play a memory game with Ephesians 6:10.



