

A Hairy Tale

Samson
Judges 13-16

Character Trait: Contentment

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recall that God was faithful to keep His promise to Samson.
- Children will draw (or write about) specific things for which they are thankful.
- Children will describe different ways contentment brings honor to God.

Supplies:

- *A Hairy Tale* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- A small ball *(suitable for throwing)*
- Clean craft sticks or strips of paper *(several for each child)*
- A clean paper cup *(one for each child)*
- Pens and/or pencils
- Coloring supplies
- Stickers *(optional)*

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children. Ask the children to raise their hand if they know what a promise is. Then, call on a few volunteers to share aloud. *(Answers will vary but may include telling someone you will do something or making a commitment to someone else.)* Next, ask the children to raise their hand if they have ever made a promise. *(Raise your hand also.)* Tell the children to put their hands down.

SAY: Today, we will learn about a man named Samson who did not keep the promises he made to God.

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following questions:

- **How many years did the Israelites wait in the desert until the time was right?** *(Forty years)*
- **Who helped the two spies by hiding them and helping them escape down the wall?** *(Rahab)*
- **What happened when the priests' feet touched the Jordan river?** *(The river stopped flowing, and everyone was able to cross on dry land.)*
- **Who told Joshua what to do in Jericho?** *(God, the Lord)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *A Hairy Tale* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- Again, God's people disobeyed Him.
- So God let the Philistines rule over them for forty years.
- Then He chose a man named Samson to set them free.
- An angel promised Samson's mother that she would have a son.
- Samson would have to make three promises to God.
- Never drink wine.
- Never touch dead things.
- Never cut his hair.
- God made Samson very strong.
- He killed a lion, and bees made honey in its body.
- Samson touched the dead lion, breaking one of his promises to God!
- He even ate the honey.
- Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah.
- The Philistines promised her lots of money to discover why Samson was so strong.
- She asked him again and again.
- Finally, Samson told Delilah his secret.
- "If my hair is cut, my strength will go."
- So, while he slept, Delilah called for a man to cut off his hair.
- Samson's strength left him.
- When the Philistines arrived, they captured him easily.
- They blinded him.
- Then they put him in prison and set him to work, dragging a heavy grinding stone.
- Slowly, Samson's hair grew back.
- The Philistines brought Samson into their temple to thank their false God, Dagon, for defeating him.
- Samson asked God to make him strong one last time.
- Samson stood between two pillars and pushed on them.
- The temple fell down, killing all the Philistines, and Samson with them.
- Samson didn't keep his promises, but God kept His!

Discussion:

(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

- **What were the three promises that Samson made to God?** *(Never drink wine, never touch dead things, never cut his hair)*
- **What did God do in return?** *(God made Samson very strong.)*
- **Who did Samson tell about the secret to his strength?** *(Delilah)*
- **What did Delilah do?** *(She had Samson's hair cut off while he slept.)*
- **How was God faithful to keep His promise to Samson?** *(God made him strong again.)*
- **What happened when Samson pushed on the two pillars of the temple?** *(The temple fell down and killed Samson and the Philistines.)*

SAY: God was faithful to keep His promise to Samson, but Samson was not content. He wanted that honey so badly that he broke his promise to God. Later, Samson showed weakness by giving in and telling Delilah the secret to his strength. In the end, God was still faithful. He once again made Samson strong, but Samson ended up killing himself along with the Philistines.

God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

SAY: God kept His promise to Samson. And we can know that God will keep His promises to us, too. This is because of Jesus, who came to save all who trust in Him.

Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

"You will become pregnant and give birth to a son *(pretend to rock a baby in your arms)*,
and his hair must never be cut *(scissor fingers back and forth)*.
For he will be dedicated to God *(bring hands together with palms up and raise them)*
as a Nazirite from birth.
He will begin to rescue *(cross arms at wrists, then release)*
Israel from the Philistines."

Judges 13:5 (NLT)

Activity:

(15 minutes)

Give one child a ball. Explain that while you sing a song, the children are to toss the ball around to different children while standing up. The child holding the ball when you stop singing is "out" and must sit down. Play until only one child is left standing. This child is the winner. Continue playing as time permits.

SAY: This game was all about timing. Each of you had a certain time to catch the ball, throw the ball, or even simply wait. Contentment is about timing, too. It is about trusting that God will provide us with what we need when we need it.

Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

SAY: One way to practice contentment is to think about something we are grateful for.

Provide each student with a few craft sticks or strips of colorful paper. Tell them to write or draw a small picture of something they are grateful for on each one. Next, provide each child with a clean paper cup and invite them to decorate it using coloring supplies and stickers *(optional)*. End the activity by instructing the children to place their sticks or strips of paper into their cups to take home.

SAY: Whenever you feel like complaining, you can choose contentment instead by grabbing a stick or strip of paper out of your "Contentment Cup." Then, you can think about this wonderful blessing from God and give thanks to Him instead.

For younger children...
Make this activity easier for younger children by suggesting small symbols or icons for them to draw on each stick or strip of paper instead. For example, a small stick-figure can represent a parent or caregiver to be thankful for, the outline of a house can represent their home, and a simple heart can represent God's love.

For older children...
Extend this activity for older children by challenging them to think of specific people for whom they are thankful. Then, provide them with sticks or strips of paper on which to write the names of these people and add to their cups.

Character Trait: Contentment

(10 minutes)

SAY: Being content means being happy with what God has given you and how things are with you. Samson's lack of contentment led him to break his promises to God.

Encourage the children to think more about contentment by asking the following:

- **Why is contentment important?** *(If we are never content, then we will always be striving to make things different. Lack of contentment can rob us of happiness.)*
- **How can choosing to be content honor God?** *(When we are content, it shows that we completely trust God's timing and provision/what He provides. Contentment also shows that we know God recognizes and provides for our needs.)*
- **How can you show contentment?** *(Answers will vary.)*

Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

SAY: Think about all that you have: the clothing you wear, the food you eat, and the people in your life. One way to show contentment is to be thankful.

Challenge the children to give thanks to God in prayer for all that He has provided for them and to identify at least one person at home for whom they are thankful.

Encourage the children to thank the people in their lives for the care and encouragement that they provide.

Closing:

(2 minutes)

SAY: God cares about us (1 Peter 5:7) and is faithful to always keep His promises (Deuteronomy 7:9, Hebrews 10:23). When we remember these two truths, it is easy to practice contentment. When we choose to trust in God completely to provide what we need when we need it, then we are free to be happy instead of wanting things we do not have.

Prayer:

(2 minutes)

SAY:

Dear God,
You are generous and faithful! We know that You keep Your promises. Help us to be content as we remember this truth.
Amen.

Notes