

SAMSON, DELILAH AND THE SECRET

The Philistines wanted to know why Samson was strong. Samson made a huge mistake in trusting someone with his secret. But God used this to help Israel become free.

by Shelby Faith

Samson met a woman named Delilah (Judges 16:4). She did bad things, but Samson liked her. He began staying at her house.

The Philistines now saw a chance to get rid of Samson. They told Delilah they would give her a lot of money if she would find out where Samson got his great strength. They wanted to know how they could overpower him.

She asked Samson the secret of his strength.

Samson lied to her. He said, "If I'm bound with seven fresh bowstrings, then I will be as weak as other men."

So the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings. She bound Samson with them after he fell asleep. The men were hiding in the room.

Delilah shouted to Samson, "Wake up, the Philistines are here!"

He got up and broke the bowstrings like a strand of yarn. So Delilah did not find out the secret of his strength.

QUIZ TIME

What did Samson do when he was tied with seven fresh bowstrings?

DELILAH TRIES AGAIN

Then Delilah told Samson, "Look, you have made fun of me and told me lies. Please tell me what you may be bound with."

So he said, "If I'm bound securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak like others."

After Samson fell asleep, Delilah took new ropes and tied Samson with them. Then she shouted again, "Wake up, Samson, the Philistines are here!"

The men were again hiding in the room. Again he broke the ropes off like a thread.

This time, Delilah was very upset. She said to Samson, "You are still making fun of me and telling me lies. Tell me what you may be tied up with so you can't get loose."

He said, "Weave the seven braids of my hair into your loom."

After he fell asleep, she wove his braids tightly into the loom. She shouted to him, "The Philistines are here!"

Samson awoke from his sleep and easily pulled out his braids that had been woven into the loom.

Now Delilah became really angry with Samson. She said to him, “How can you say you love me? You have made me look foolish and lied to me three times. And you still refuse to tell me where your great strength comes from.”

TELLING THE SECRET

Every day she pestered him, asking him over and over to tell her. Samson became so weary, he decided to tell her his secret.

“No razor has ever touched my head. My hair has never been cut. I have been a Nazirite to God from my birth. If I’m shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I will become weak, and be like other men.”

As soon as Delilah heard his words, she sent for the Philistines. When they came, she told them what Samson’s secret was and how he could lose his strength. The Philistines brought the money they had promised her.

Delilah then lulled Samson to sleep. She called for a man to shave off Samson’s hair.

Once again, she shouted, “Wake up—the Philistines are here, Samson!”

He awoke from his sleep, but he found he was no longer strong. God had departed from him.

SAMSON IN PRISON

Then the Philistines captured him. They put out his eyes, causing him to be blind. They brought him down to Gaza, one of their cities. They bound him up with bronze shackles and put him in prison. They made him grind grain.

As time went on, however, his hair began to grow again.

Meanwhile, the Philistines gathered together to offer a sacrifice to Dagon, their god. They were happy. They said their god had allowed them to capture Samson.

As they were celebrating, they said, “Bring Samson here, so he can perform for us.”

So Samson was brought from the prison, and he performed for them. Then he stood between two pillars of their temple.

SAMSON’S LAST STAND

Samson said to the person who led him, “Let me feel the pillars that support the temple so that I can lean on them.”

About 3,000 men and women were on the temple roof. The great men of the Philistines were inside.

Then Samson prayed to God, “Oh God, remember me! Strengthen me, just this once, so that I may take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!”

Samson braced himself against the two middle pillars that supported the temple.

QUIZ TIME
What was the secret of
Samson’s strength?

He had one on his right and the other on his left. Then he said, “Let me die with the Philistines!”

He pushed on the pillars with all his might. The temple fell down on all the people in it. So he killed more at his death than he had killed in his life.

His family came and took his body home. They buried him in the tomb of his father, Manoah.

God used Samson to begin to free Israel from the Philistines. With Samson’s mighty hands, God brought sudden destruction upon thousands of Philistines.

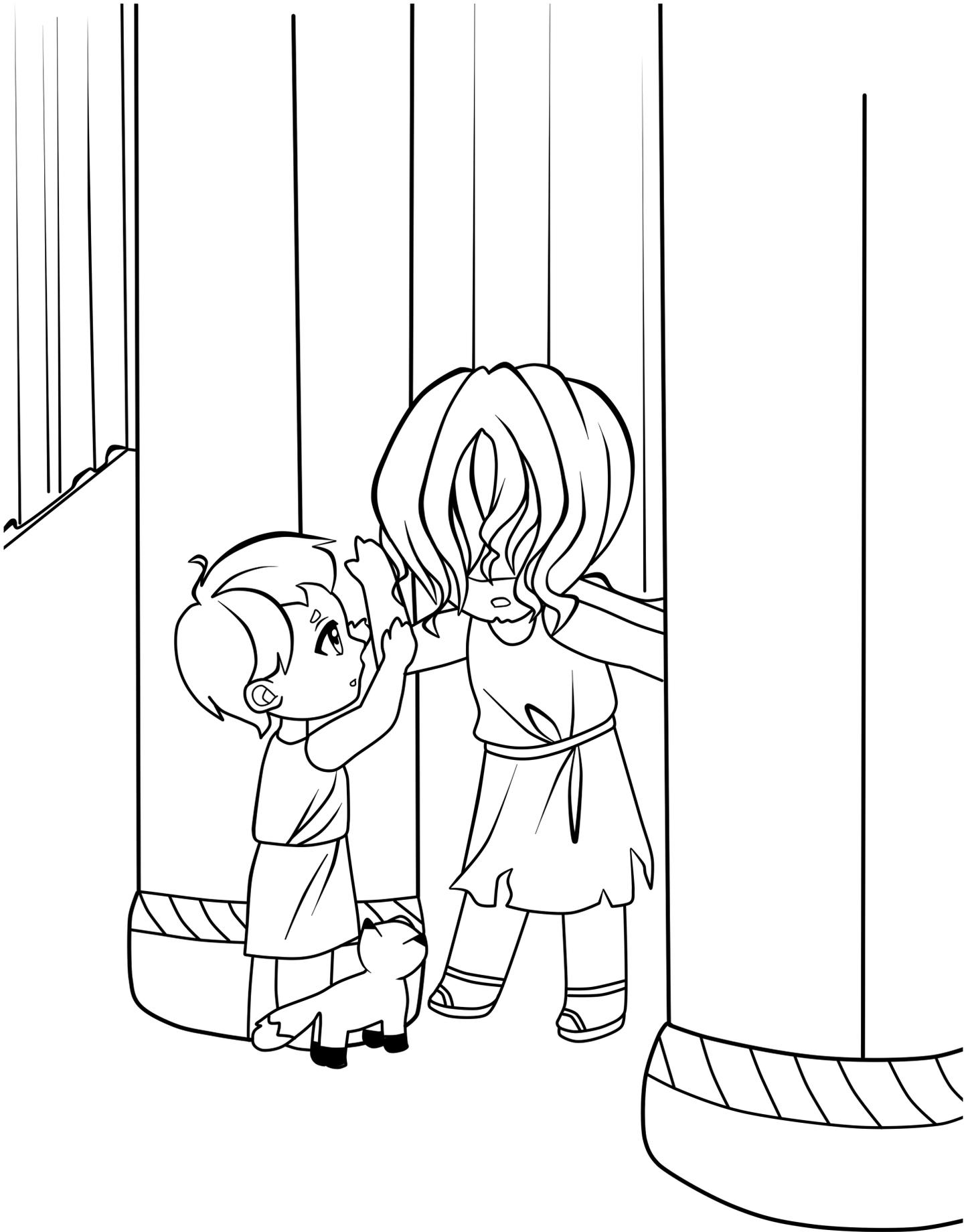
Samson had many faults, but he must have repented of his sinful ways. God gave him back his mighty strength. He showed faith in God many times in his life and by his final act. God considered him worthy to be mentioned in the Faith Chapter, in Hebrews 11:32.

QUESTIONS

Here are some questions to think about or talk about as a family:

1. What was the name of the woman Samson liked?
2. What was the secret of Samson’s strength?
3. What did Samson do when he was between the temple pillars?
4. How did Samson show faith in God?

Read this story in the Bible in Judges 16. See also the Bible story “[Samson and the Riddle](#).”



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