



October 27, 2019

Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels

The Judges: Samson

BIG IDEA: God desires righteousness and wants us to control our anger.

BIBLE BASIS: Judges 13–16

KEY VERSE: “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.” James 1:19-20 (NIV)

 **SCHEDULE**
SMALL GROUP 
CONNECT

7–15 minutes

 **LARGE GROUP**
LESSON

30–40 minutes

REFLECT AND RESPOND
STATIONS

7–15 minutes

 **SMALL GROUP**
ACTIVITIES

15–25 minutes

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LEADER DEVOTIONAL

When you study the life of Samson, one of the last people to rule as judge over Israel, it's clear that he's one of the most tragic figures in the Bible. From birth, Samson was a man of incredible potential. His birth was orchestrated from heaven above and announced by an angel, he was set apart for God since day one, he was chosen from the beginning to lead Israel out of the hands of the Philistines, and he was endowed with a Herculean amount of physical strength. Yet at the end of his life, he was held captive with his head shaved, his eyes plucked out, and displayed like a trophy by the very people he had been chosen to defeat. So what went wrong?

If you spend some time reading the account of Samson in Judges 13–16, you begin to see a troubling pattern. With all of his strength, Samson sought what was right in his own eyes, rather than the life of righteousness that God had called him to. From an early age, Samson showed contempt for his parents and refused to listen to their wise counsel or obey their instructions. Not once, but twice he yoked himself in marriage to Philistine women who worshipped foreign gods. He gave into his lustful desires and slept with prostitutes. And on many occasions, Samson let his anger rule over him.

Not many of us can say that we were born with quite the same potential as Samson. Nevertheless, God has bestowed upon every one of us unique gifts, abilities, and passions along with a calling to use them for the benefit and glory of His kingdom. How many of us, though, like Samson, have wasted those gifts, abilities, and passions in pursuit of what is right in our own eyes? Samson's life, as tragic as it is, serves as a warning to each of us as to what can become of our life when we use our God-given potential for the pursuit of our own unrighteous pleasure. Consider for a minute how you're using the gifts that God has given you. Is He being glorified through them?

Fortunately, for as long as we have breath, it's never too late to make adjustments. Through His divine wisdom, God knows that no one can be completely righteous on their own. And through His divine grace, He has given us Jesus, who took *our* sins and gave us *His* righteousness to call our own. What an incredible Savior we serve! Let's seek to serve *Him* rather than ourselves.

David Rausch
Mooblio President





LARGE GROUP SKILL BUILDING

Helping Kids Reflect and Respond to God

At the end of every GO! large group lesson is an opportunity for kids to reflect and respond to God through prayer, journaling, scripture reading, or art. It's what we refer to as the Reflect and Respond Stations. This time is especially important because it allows kids to interact with God on a deep and personal level through various age-appropriate spiritual disciplines. You've probably already noticed what an incredible experience this can be for kids, but did you know that you can help to make the experience even more rich and meaningful? It's true! Here are a few ways you can help:

Establish a quiet atmosphere: Creating a quiet atmosphere helps kids focus on God instead of the other kids around them. Before dismissing the kids, remind them that this is a time for them to talk to God, not their friends. Right before dismissing kids to move about the stations, give your final instructions in a whisper. Consider telling kids they can begin moving on the count of three. By the time you get to one, mouth the number silently and motion for the kids to get up.

Help out at a station: Most kids will eventually know exactly what to do and how to do it, but some kids (especially young and new kids) might need a little bit of direction. Pick a station and be available to help kids who need it. At the prayer and journaling station, quietly help kids who need assistance with spelling. Help organize the materials at the art station. Be available at the reading station to help kids find the selected Bible passage or to quietly read to kids who need assistance.

Provide prayer support: Sometimes it might become evident that a kid could use some prayer (especially at the prayer station). Make yourself available to quietly pray with kids. When you're not praying with a specific kid, pray silently that God would move in the hearts and minds of all the kids during this time.

Follow up afterwards: From time to time, ask the kids after the Reflect and Respond Stations if they heard anything special from the Holy Spirit or if they said anything special to God. Processing the experience out loud sometimes helps kids make the most of their time with God. It also gives you a window into the hearts and minds of the kids.



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UNIT DESCRIPTION

It's the distant future, the year 4,000 A.D., and the universe has run low on its most precious resource—fabulous hair. During the “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” series, small groups will be divided into two teams and will battle each other for the mythical Wig of Walamazoo. In order to win these lovely locks, though, kids will have to exhibit team energy, show team spirit, and participate in a trivia competition. All the while kids will be embarking on a life-changing battle through the Book of Judges to discover the next part of God’s Big Bible Story.

SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS

- Divide your small groups into the two teams. Each team can have multiple small groups representing it. Kids will work within their small group to earn points for their team. If you have an uneven number of groups on the teams, you may want to award the team with fewer groups more points for some of the competitions in order to make it fair.
- Lay down a strip of tape through the middle of the room. During the lesson, have the “Space Ninjas” sit on one side and have the “Pirate Squirrels” sit on the other.
- Place the bin or bag containing all of the point balls in the teaching area.
- Place the two team bins in the teaching area. Print out the team signs ahead of time and attach one sign to each bin. These bins will be used at the end to collect all of the points that were tossed out to each team.
- Print out a set of A, B, C, and D signs for each small group. Give the set of signs to the small group leaders to have with them during the large group time.
- Choose a fun, crazy looking wig for the Wig of Walamazoo. Place the wig in the teaching area. The wig will serve as the winning team’s prize.
- Place a roll of crepe paper in the teaching area. You may find it easier to manage the crepe paper by tearing off two 4- to 5-foot strips ahead of time as opposed to binding the kid’s wrists with the crepe paper still attached to the roll.
- Place a string mop or a single cheerleading pom pom in the teaching area.
- Using a Sharpie® marker, draw an angry face on a deflated round balloon. Put some confetti or small pieces of torn-up paper inside of the deflated balloon. You might find it easier to use a funnel to insert the confetti. You will need one of these confetti-filled balloons for each service. Place the deflated angry face balloon with confetti in the teaching area along with a safety pin to pop it.
- Choose which of the Reflect and Respond Stations you would like to make available. Set out the appropriate materials for each of those stations.



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★ LARGE GROUP LESSON

CG: show “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” title graphic
Sound: Play upbeat music as kids move to large group area

Tech Note: When all of the kids have moved to the Large Group area and have taken a seat, begin playing the “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” intro video.

VDO: Play “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” intro video

PREPARE FOR BATTLE!

Large Group Leader: (*Place the Wig of Walamazoo on your head.*) Hello everybody and welcome to another week of “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels!” I know what you’re thinking—(*say it “fabulously”*) “Wow! His/her hair is sooo fabulous looking!” So true! Here’s the best part, though—it could be all yours. That’s right folks—once again we’ll be battling our way through the Book of Judges and the winner of the battle will receive (*point to the wig on your head*) the marvelous, the magical, the mythical Wig of Walamazoo! Before we get started, though, I think we should go over how this battle is going to work.

On this side of the room (*point to one side*) we have the Space Ninjas. Let me hear it from you! (*Space Ninjas cheer. Toss some points.*) And on this side we have the Pirate Squirrels. Let me hear you cheer! (*Pirate Squirrels cheer. Toss some points.*) The object of the competition is to be the team with the most points at the end of the hour. Each one of these (*hold up ball or other object representing points*) is worth one point. Your team will be collecting them throughout the lesson. There are three ways that you can earn points: Team Energy, Team Participation, and Team Competitions.

CG: Team Points graphic

At the end of the hour, we’ll count up the points. Whichever team has the most will win the coveted “Wig of Walamazoo!” (*Take wig off and hold it up. Set it aside.*) Are you ready for today’s story? (*Kids reply.*)

The points are a wonderful group management tool. Use them to reward positive behavior. Toss out points when kids are cheering their team on, participating in something, or exhibiting other positive behaviors.

CG: “The Big Bible Story” graphic

THE BIG BIBLE STORY—SAMSON

Many years after Gideon died, new enemies called the Philistines attacked and defeated Israel. So God sent His people a new judge to rule over them—a judge named Samson. There was something different about Samson, though. God gave Samson incredible strength. Let me show you something Samson was able to do with his strength. Space Ninjas—roar at the Pirate Squirrels like a lion. (*Space Ninjas roar. Toss points.*) Pirate Squirrels—do your best muscle man pose at the Space Ninjas. (*Pirate Squirrels pose. Toss points.*) One time Samson (*point to Pirate Squirrels*) tore a man-eating lion (*point to Space Ninjas*) apart with his bare hands! God had given Samson incredible strength so that he could help free the Israelites from the Philistines. Unfortunately, though, Samson had a major weakness.

You see—Samson had trouble living in a way that God says is right. **CG: Samson’s Sins.** He disobeyed



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his parents, he married a Philistine woman who didn't know or love God, and most of all, he had a terrible anger problem! I'll give some points to the team that can look the angriest. (*Teams try to look angry. Toss points.*) Samson got more and more angry until he burst. God wanted Samson to free the Israelites from the Philistines, but Samson was too busy getting angry and picking fights.

The Philistines got so tired of Samson that they came up with a plan to capture and kill him. Let's see what it was. **CG: Judges 16:4-5.** I'll give points to the first team to find Judges 16:4-5 in their Bible.

Award points. Read the verse aloud. It says, "Some time later, Samson fell in love again. The woman lived in the Valley of Sorek. Her name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her. They said, 'See if you can get him to tell you the secret of why he's so strong. Find out how we can overpower him. Then we can tie him up. We can bring him under our control. Each of us will give you 28 pounds of silver.'"

CG: "The Big Bible Story" graphic

Delilah was a Philistine, so she was happy to help them. I need one volunteer from each team to help me with something. (*Invite two kids to teaching area.*) When Delilah asked Samson how he could be tied up, Samson told her, "If someone ties me up with leather straps, I'll be as weak as any other man." That night, while Samson was sleeping, Delilah tied his hands together with leather straps. (*Quickly bind one of the kid's wrists with crepe paper.*) When she was finished, she shouted, (*shout line*) "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" But when Samson woke up, he snapped the leather straps like they were nothing. (*Tell kid to break free. Give him a point and dismiss him.*)

The next night, Delilah said to Samson, "No—*seriously*, tell me how someone could tie you up. This time Samson told her, "If someone ties me up with brand new ropes, then I'll be as weak as any other man." So that's what Delilah did—while Samson was sleeping, she tied his hands together with brand new rope. (*Quickly bind the other kid's wrists with crepe paper.*) When she was finished, she shouted, (*shout line*) "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" But when Samson woke up, he snapped the new rope like it was a piece of string. (*Tell kid to break free. Give him a point and dismiss him.*)

Delilah didn't give up, though. She kept on nagging and pestering Samson until he finally told her the truth. I'll give some points to the first team to bring me one piece of hair. (*Take piece of hair from kid. Give team points. Hold up piece of hair.*) Samson told her, "I am a Nazirite—set apart for God. (*Hold a mop or pom pom on your head like hair.*) I've never cut my hair. If you shave my head, I'll be as weak as any other man." When Samson fell asleep, Delilah cut all of his hair off (*remove mop or pom pom*) and when the Philistines attacked him, he had no strength to defend himself. The Philistines were able to easily capture Samson and make him a prisoner at their temple.

CG: "Samson Brings Down the Temple" illustration

In his final moments of life, Samson called out to God and asked for one last burst of strength. Samson grabbed ahold of the two pillars that were holding the temple up (*reach out like grabbing pillars*) and pushed with all of his might. The temple came crashing down, killing him and the 3,000 Philistines that were in the temple with him. If it wasn't for his anger and disobedience, God could have used Samson to do incredible things.

CG: "Big Bible Story Questions" graphic



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BIG BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS

At the end of the Bible story have the kids turn briefly to their small groups and discuss the following questions: **For Younger Kids:** **What was your favorite part of this story? How to you think Samson’s life would have been different if he didn’t get so angry?** **For Older Kids:** **What do you think this story teaches us about God? How do you think Samson’s life might have been different if he had obeyed God and controlled his temper?** After a few minutes, draw their attention back to the teaching area.

CG: show “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” title graphic

REVIEW BATTLE

Now that you’ve heard the story, I think it’s time to see how well you were listening. Are you all ready for the big review battle? Here’s how the battle works. I’m going to ask you all a series of multiple choice questions. If you think you know the answer, turn to your small group leader and tell them what it is. Your leader will then hold up the sign with the most popular answer from your group. Here we go...

Give the groups about 10 seconds to choose their answer and hold up the right sign before the answer is revealed. **For younger kids, you may elect to give them more time.** Once the answer is revealed, toss out one point to all of the groups with the right answer. (*Correct answer is in italics below.*)

Music: (Optional) Play upbeat music during game

CG: Who was Israel’s new enemy in the story of Samson?

- A. Philippians
- B. *Philistines*
- C. Philippines
- D. Philistinkeys

CG: What was Samson able to kill with his bare hands?

- A. A giant tiger
- B. A lion-eating man
- C. *A man-eating lion*
- D. An angry badger

CG: Which of these things did Samson NOT do?

- A. Disobeyed his parents
- B. Married a Philistine woman
- C. Lost his temper
- D. *Worshipped false gods*



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CG: Who was the woman that helped the Philistines capture Samson?

- A. Deborah
- B. *Delilah*
- C. Diana
- D. Damaris

CG: Which of the following was NOT one of the ways Delilah tried to capture Samson?

- A. *Tied his hands with wet rope*
- B. Tied his hands with leather straps
- C. Tied his hands with new rope
- D. Cut his hair off

CG: “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” title graphic

At the end of the review battle have the kids place all of their points inside their team’s bucket or bag. Set it aside for later. At some point after the small group time, count up the points for each team and announce a winner. Choose a small group leader or kid from the winning team and place the “Wig of Walamazoo” on his head.

BURSTING WITH ANGER

What a shame! God could have used Samson to do amazing things, but he was just too big of a mess. Samson wasn’t able to live a life of righteousness. Whoa—“righteousness”—that’s kind of big word. Let’s take a look at what that word means. (*Invite kids to read definition with you.*)

CG: Righteousness: (*noun*) Living your life in the way that God says is right.

Who remembers some of the things that Samson did that were *not* righteous? (*Answers include: disobeyed parents, married a Philistine—someone who didn’t love or follow God, anger problem.*) Samson made a lot of poor choices, but one of Samson’s greatest problems was that he let his anger control him. Let me show you what I mean.

(*Hold up deflated balloon with confetti inside and an angry face drawn on it.*) In our story, Samson kept on getting more (*give another puff*) and more (*give another puff*) and more angry (*continue puffing until balloon is full*) until he finally burst. (*Pop balloon with pin. Confetti will scatter.*) And when Samson burst, he made a big mess! So what do you think? Did that kind of anger help Samson live a life of righteousness? (*Kids respond.*) No way! In fact, that’s exactly what the Bible tells us. (*Encourage kids to open their Bibles to James 1:19-20. Be prepared to give younger kids more time and assistance in finding the verse. When ready, choose a kid to read it aloud or read it aloud yourself while the kids follow along.*)

CG: “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”
James 1:19-20

This verse tells us that getting angry and blowing up is *not* living life the way that God says is right. How about you? Do you ever get so angry that you blow up and make a big mess? Have you ever yelled at someone or thrown a tantrum out of anger? (*Kids respond. Raise your hand.*) I know that I have. I think



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most of us have. But that's not what God desires from us. God desires righteousness and He wants us to control our anger.

(Sit or kneel near kids.) Here's the good news, though. God knows that we all mess up sometimes. He knows that none of us can be completely righteous on our own. That's why He gave us Jesus. Samson sacrificed himself to help save Israel, but Jesus sacrificed Himself to help save the whole world! And because of that, we can now have eternal life with Him in heaven! Let's pray and thank God for such an amazing gift!

When finished close the Large Group time by praying for the kids in whatever way the Holy Spirit prompts you. Following the prayer, explain to the kids which of the Reflect and Respond Stations will be available. Remind them to move about the stations very quietly. Tell them they are free to respond to God in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads them, but if they need suggestions, some of the stations will give them ideas for how to pray, write, or draw. Give each child one "GO! Home" sheet and instruct them to take it with them to the stations. Place small group leaders at the different stations to quietly help the kids. The stations listed below are just the ones that have prompts that are specific to today's lesson. For more instructions on how the Reflect and Respond Stations work as well as a full list of possible stations, see the "GO! Guide."

CG: "Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels" title graphic
Music: (Optional) Play quiet instrumental music

REFLECT AND RESPOND STATIONS

Prayer Station prompt: Write a prayer to God asking Him to help you control your anger and live in a way that He says is right.

Journal Station prompt: Tell God about some of the things that make you angry. Tell God you're sorry if you've lost your temper or yelled out of anger.

Bible Station prompt: Read it for yourself: Judges 16:4-31. Draw a picture of the story or write to God your favorite part of the story. Tell Him why you liked it.

Art Station prompt: What do you look like when you get angry? Draw a picture of it. Write the words, "God, help me be slow to get angry."