

THE STORY OF SAMSON

Now to his [Samson's] surprise, a young lion came roaring against him.
And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart....
(Judges 14:5-6)

When we read the story of Samson in the Lord's Word, we marvel at his amazing strength. Samson pictures the strength of the Word in its literal meaning—the power that the truths of the Old and New Testaments can give us as we go through life trying to do what is right and resist what is wrong. But despite his great strength, Samson made some big mistakes in his life. He was strong when he looked to the Lord, but got into trouble when he acted on his own. This illustrates the importance of looking to the Lord to help us understand the Word and to have its power work in our lives.

READ: “The Story of Samson and Our Spiritual Rebirth” by the Rt. Rev. Louis B. King
Samson's riddle to the Philistines contains in summary the whole meaning of his dramatic life and how it pictures each person's journey of spiritual rebirth or regeneration.

READ: “The Meaning of Samson” by the Rev. Ormond Odhner (*for teens*)

An overview of the meaning of some specific aspects of the Samson story adapted from a series of chapel talks given at Bryn Athyn College of the New Church.

READ: Family Talks About the Story of Samson by the Rev. Harold Cranch

The first four talks in this series review episodes in Samson's life and briefly describe what the stories mean in our lives. The final one looks at the spiritual representation of Samson.

Samson and the Lion

Samson's Battle

Samson Is Taken Prisoner

Samson's Death

What Samson Represents

PROJECT: Samson Collage (*ages 4-8*)

Make a picture of Samson using a variety of materials. (Because of the emphasis on hair in this story, it would be ideal to give Samson a good head of hair using yarn, synthetic hair, or even hair saved from a haircut.)

ACTIVITY: Picture Cards for Sequencing the Story of Samson (*ages 5-9*)

Arrange the picture cards in the order these events happened in Samson's life.

PROJECT: Samson Bas-Relief Project (*ages 9-12*)

Use a modeling compound to make a bas-relief illustration of Samson pulling down the pillars of the Philistine temple after asking the Lord to give him strength.

ACTIVITY: Story-line for Samson's Life (*for ages 8-14*)

A story-line graphs the ups and downs of events. Which do you think would picture the story of Samson's life better—a straight line or a jagged line?

ACTIVITY: Samson Plays (*ages 9-12*)

Four short plays that can be used to dramatize portions of the story of Samson:

- [The Birth of Samson](#) (*Judges 13*)
- [Samson's Riddle](#) (*Judges 14*)
- [Philistines Against Lehi](#) (*Judges 15*)
- [Samson's Death](#) (*Judges 16*)

ACTIVITY: Venn Diagram Comparison of Lives of the Lord and Samson (*ages 12 and up*)

What are some of the similarities between Samson's life and the Lord's life? For starters, consider parallels in Samson's life with the angel Gabriel telling Mary that the Lord would be born and with Judas betraying the Lord to His enemies.

SPIRITUAL TASK: Strength in the Word by the Rev. David Roth (*teens and up*)

Consider the story of Samson to learn why it is essential for us to read the Word each day.

COLORING PAGES

[The Angel Appears to Samson's Parents](#) (*Judges 13*)

[Samson and the Lion](#) (*Judges 14*)

[Samson and the Foxes](#) (*Judges 15*)

[Samson and the City Gate](#) (*Judges 16*)

[Samson Is Enslaved](#) (*Judges 16*)

[Samson Destroys the Temple of the Philistines](#) (*Judges 16*)

THE LORD GIVES US HIS WORD

*The Word is from the Lord, about the Lord, and is the Lord.
(Apocalypse Revealed 200)*

The Lord gives us the Word so that we can learn Divine truths that can help us walk the path to heaven and fight against evil and falsity. If we want to make the world a better place, a good start is to make a commitment to reading the Lord's Word each day and finding ways to apply it in our lives.

READ: "A Precious Heritage: Reading the Word" by the Rev. Daniel Heinrichs

If a person were to offer you a great fortune to read a book and master its contents, would you not make every effort to do so, no matter how difficult the style and vocabulary? How much more then should we make the effort to master those books which are the source of eternal life!

COLORING PAGE: The Word of the Lord

This line drawing shows the Lord holding out His Word to us.

READ: The Lord Gave Us the Word by Freda C. Bradin (*for preschoolers*)

An illustrated version of the song "Father in Heaven, Who Gave Us the Word" that can be stapled together to form a book for young children.

SING: Father in Heaven, Who Gave Us the Word

See also "The Lord Gave Us the Word" (above) which illustrates this song.

READ: "The Word Is a Light to Your Path" by Cathy C. Schnarr *(for preschoolers)*

In this story a parent relieves a child's fear of the dark, telling him, "The Lord loves you and wants you to be safe. The Word is how He talks to us and if we read it every day, He can speak to us and help us to be strong."

PROJECT: Make a Book about the Word *(for ages 8-12)*

Each page tells children something about the Lord's Word and suggests ways they can illustrate it.

PROJECT: Open Word Snowflake *(for ages 10-14)*

Use this pattern to make a beautiful snowflake of the open Word.

PROJECT: The Word Has Layers of Meaning *(for ages 8-12)*

Make a little book to illustrate the layers of meaning within the Word.

SING: O Word of God Incarnate

POWER OF DIVINE TRUTH

*It is by means of the truths in a person that the Lord has the power to save him. For a person is reformed and regenerated and is at the same time taken out of hell and introduced into heaven, by means of truths from the sense of the letter of the Word.
(Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture 49)*

The power of the Word can open heaven for a person and help him do battle against evil and falsity. This power is from the Lord through the Divine truths of His Word. The Lord gives angels and people this power according to their reception of His truths and the loves within their hearts. By reading the Word and trying to apply it in our lives, we can begin to sense the power of these truths to help us turn toward heaven and resist the evils of hell.

READ: "The Power of the Word" by the Rev. Geoffrey S. Childs

When the Lord said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" He was speaking directly to us in our moods of despair. For when our sphere is negative, we are in a prison of our own spirit. We must turn to something outside of ourselves, something in which the Lord Himself may be found.

READ: "Getting Strength from the Word" by the Rev. Kurt Horigan Asplundh

What strength does the Word have and how can we find and use it in our lives? The author explains, "The Word is like a heavenly shield. Use it to protect yourself from the attacks of hell. The Word is like a well of water. Drink from it and discover unfailing truths springing up into everlasting life. The Word is like a garment, a coat of many colors. Wrap yourself in its warmth and beauty."

READ: "All Power Is by Means of the Word" by the Rt. Rev. George de Charms

Explains how laws, both natural and spiritual, are a source of strength and power for those who follow them. And the spiritual laws of life are contained in the Lord's Word.

READ: “The Power to Resist Temptation” by the Rev. Norbert Rogers

Examines the Lord's temptation in the wilderness and how like the Lord, we too can use the power of the Word to resist temptation.

ACTIVITY: Using the Truths of the Word to Fight Evil

When the devil tempted the Lord in the wilderness, the Lord answered him with quotations from the Word (Matthew 4:1-11). We too, can rely on the truths of the Word to help us through difficulties.

COLORING PAGE: The Lord's Temptation

THE WORD IN HEAVEN

*In heaven Divine Truth has all power, and apart from it there is no power whatever.
(Heaven and Hell 137:2)*

The beauty and power of the Word is more clearly seen in the spiritual world than here on earth. The angels have great power—both to help people on earth and to supervise evil spirits in hell—and this power comes to them as they receive Divine Truth from the Lord. The Heavenly Doctrine tells us that the Word in a temple in heaven shines before the angels as a great star or a sun. Evil spirits cannot endure this light. If they look upon the Word, evil spirits see their attitude toward these Divine truths reflected in the way it appears. Since the evil spirits receive no light from it, the Word appears to be black and even covered with soot to those who reject the Word (see *True Christian Religion* 209:3).

STORY: “The Golden Heart” by Amena Pendleton Haines

A story about the way the Lord protected a good person who was in the spiritual world, but had not yet found his way to heaven. An angel gave him a golden heart to protect him from those who wished to harm him.

PROJECT: The Golden Heart (ages 4-8)

Make a golden heart to picture the way the Lord protects us by giving us the truths of His Word.

PROJECT: Who Can See the Beauty of the Lord's Word? (ages 3-8)

A project to help children explore how angels see the Word compared to how evil spirits see it.

COLORING PAGE: The Word in Heaven

PROJECT: The Word in Heaven Shining Like the Sun or a Star (ages 5-12)

Illustrate one of the ways that the Word appears to the angels in heaven—as a great star or the sun.

PROJECT: When an Evil Person Touches the Word (ages 4-9)

Shows what happens when an evil person in the spiritual world tries to touch the Word.

COLORING PAGE: The Power of the Word in Heaven

PROJECT: The Word Is Like a Palace (ages 5-10)

Illustrate the teaching that Word is like a palace with the foundation being the literal, external sense.