

Judges 14

King James Version (KJV)

14 And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. (Timnath- also called Timnah in other Books) (This is about 20 years later)

²And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. Exodus-34:16 (This is against God's commands to Israel. Do not marry into the heathen tribes. The woman is a Philistine) also Deuteronomy-7:3

³Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well. (His parents want him to marry an Israelite woman. Samson isn't listening)

⁴But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel. (God inspired Samson to go after this Philistine woman. It was all a part of His plan)

⁵Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. (This is a fully grown adult young lion)

⁶And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. (He killed the lion without a weapon. He is exhibiting extraordinary strength)

⁷And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

⁸And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion. (In very arid lands, it is possible for a carcass to dry <mummify> without decomposing. The bees had built a hive in a cavity in the lion's carcass)

⁹And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion. (Honey was the food of prophets and Nazarites. They probably would not have eaten had they known that the hive was inside the carcass of a lion. Coming from a dead animal's carcass they would have considered the honey unclean)

¹⁰So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do. (It was customary to have a 7 day feast on this occasion – a bachelor party)

¹¹And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. (These are all Philistines. They probably brought these companions in to check out Samson. He was an Israelite and they were Philistines)

¹²And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments: (sheets = shirts – better translation) (7 changes of garments are lot of clothes for the time. Most people had one or two changes of garments and 2 shirts. Seven days of drinking can lead young men to make stupid decisions)

¹³But if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it. (By this time, the Philistines have been oppressing Israel about 40 years. These young men think that they are superior to any Israelite. This bet will cause trouble between Samson and the Philistines)

¹⁴And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle. (He's referring to the lion and the honey)

¹⁵And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so? (Seventh-> Fourth day in the Septuagint. Translation error in the KJV) (Samson's wife = Samson's betrothed – better translation)

(The Philistines are showing their true colors – threatening to murder the woman and her family over a bet for clothing. If they can't win, they'll cheat or kill to get what they want)

¹⁶ And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee? (No one knows the riddle but Samson)

¹⁷ And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people. (She was trying to save her life and the life of her parents. The Philistines had threatened to kill her and her parents)

¹⁸ And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? And what is stronger than a lion? and he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle. (Samson knew they had coerced the answer from his fiancé)

¹⁹ And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house. (He slew 30 men, took their garments and gave it to these 30 that had cheated on the bet. He then left without his wife. He believed that she had betrayed him)

²⁰ But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend. (Her father gave his wife to a Philistine, as revenge against Samson)

(The Philistines now hate Samson, not Israel. God will use Samson to punish the Philistines for oppressing Israel 40 years)