

Day 252 - SATURDAY: September 9th

Judges 14

Judges 14:1-20 NKJV

Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife." Then his father and mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well." But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD—that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel. So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion. He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so. And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. Then Samson said to them, "Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing. But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty

changes of clothing." And they said to him, "Pose your riddle, that we may hear it." So he said to them: "Out of the eater came something to eat, And out of the strong came something sweet." Now for three days they could not explain the riddle. But it came to pass on the seventh day that they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband, that he may explain the riddle to us, or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? Is that not so?" Then Samson's wife wept on him, and said, "You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my people, but you have not explained it to me." And he said to her, "Look, I have not explained it to my father or my mother; so should I explain it to you?" Now she had wept on him the seven days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people. So the men of the city said to 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 to them: "If you had not plowed with my heifer, You would not have solved my riddle!" Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father's house. And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program: "Samson's life as a deliverer for Israel stands in sharp contrast to the other deliverers God raised up for Israel. Despite such promising beginnings, Samson showed himself susceptible to being foolishly enticed by the world. God did not want the Israelites intermarrying with pagan gentiles, but Samson took a Philistine woman as his first wife. Also, Samson, as a Nazirite, should have avoided any uncleanness, but he took the honey from the carcass of the lion, which would have rendered the honey unclean (compare Leviticus 11:24-38).

In short, Samson was a hardheaded man, but God would use that as a means of provoking the Philistines and delivering Israel.

The marriage of Samson, and the trickery that attended it, also shows that Samson was easily manipulated by the object of his desire. Neither his first, unnamed, wife, nor the woman Delilah would prove to be loving, faithful wives—but, rather, willing tools in the hands of the Philistine oppressors. Moreover, Samson seemed to be generally blind to their deceptions.

These kind of strange personal characteristics in a deliverer of Israel seem to be contradictory to the purposes of God. But in the case of Samson, God intended to use just such a man to seek an occasion against the Philistines (Judges 14:4). God can use the most unlikely of instruments to accomplish His purposes, even the very weaknesses and sins of men. If this is so with the weaknesses of God's servants, how much more when His servants purge themselves of sin and weakness and become truly holy and spiritually strong! Let us all strive to be just such excellent tools in the hands of our awesome God.” [END]

Verse 4 – It’s interesting to me to see that this was all part of God’s ultimate plan.

Verse 19 – John Gill’s commentary states: “one of the five principal cities of the Philistines; it lay near the Mediterranean sea, and, according to Bunting, was twenty four miles from Timnath; why he went so far, is not easy to say; some think there was some grand solemnity or festival observed there at this time, which he knew of, when persons put on their best suits of apparel, and such he wanted: and slew thirty men of them; in vindication of which, it may be observed, that Samson was now raised up of God to be judge of Israel; and that he acted now as such, and under the direction and impulse of the Spirit of God, and the persons he slew

were the common enemies of Israel; and if now observing a festival in honour of their gods, they were justly cut off for their idolatry:” [END]

Verse 20 – The Adam Clarke commentary states: “This was the same kind of person who is called the friend of the bridegroom, Joh_3:29. And it is very likely that she loved this person better than she loved her husband, and went to him as soon as Samson had gone to his father’s house at Zorah. She might, however, have thought herself abandoned by him, and therefore took another; this appears to have been the persuasion of her father, Jdg_15:2. But her betraying his secret and his interests to his enemies was a full proof he was not very dear to her;” [END]