

Episode #536 - Judges 14 – Samson 3: A Wedding for Samson

I. In the book of Judges, we have a brief record of the early history (the first centuries) of the history of the land of Israel. We see the leaders God chose, judges, who ruled under Jehovah, the King. Through the lives and work of these judges, we can learn about God's works and ways.

II. Israel again fell into idolatry, and this time were enslaved to the Philistines forty years! At last Yahweh sent an Angel to the wife of a man named Manoah to tell her she would have a son who would be a Nazirite, set apart to the Lord, from his birth. As the angel foretold the child was born and they named him Samson. Yet it seems his parents spoiled him, making him think he could do whatever he wanted. He went to a Philistine city, saw a Philistine girl there, and decided he wanted to marry her. His parents tried to argue with him to choose an Israelite girl instead of a Philistine girl not in relationship with God, but he refused to listen.

III. A Wedding for Samson.

- A. Verse 5. Lions were common in that part of the world. Middle eastern lions, not African. We have lions in America as well (mountain lions).
- B. Verse 6. The power of the Spirit! Thus we do not need to picture him as giant and muscular. Was Samson even large? He might have been no larger than anyone else.
- C. Verse 7. She obviously did not please him for the right reasons! Probably looks.
- D. Verse 8. Apparently they arranged the marriage and now are returning to celebrate it. He wants to see the lion carcass, and finds a bees nest in it. A strange thing!
- E. Verse 9. He eats the honey (how did he get rid of the bees?) and brings some to his parents. A lion was an unclean animal, so its dead body would defile, was unclean. Leviticus 5:2. Note his attitude toward the Nazirite vow, and unclean laws! He even defiles his parents along with himself without telling them.

IV. The Riddle.

- A. Verse 10. The marriage custom of the time: a week long celebration.
- B. Verse 11. They give him 30 companions. We would call these groomsmen. But the Philistines provide them, rather than Samson.
- C. Verse 12. Samson has a clever plan to enrich himself. He proposes a riddle.
- D. Verse 13 They agree to his proposal.
- E. Verse 14. His riddle is the lion carcass with the honey out of it. They are stumped for three of the seven days and realize they have little hope of solving it. Note: Samson acts like a muscle-head, but he is not dumb.
- F. Verse 15. The fourth day in the Sept. Seven a mistake in the Hebrew ancient script. Remember that they used letters for numbers (like Roman numerals). The ancient Hebrew alphabet was not the same as the one used today (the Syrian, but they probably used the Pheonician). In the old alphabet, the letter for seven and four looked quite similar. Note "three" in verse 14. Notice the great kind of people Samson had for groomsmen! Samson is marrying into such a violent people.
- G. Verse 16. Note she does not trust Samson enough to bring the problem to him. Then, notice how much he values her: much less than his parents!
- H. Verse 17. She bothers him from the fourth to the seventh day. Remember, she is trying to save her life. Finally he relents, and she immediately gives it away.
- I. Verse 18. The men of the city give the answer. He realizes she gave him away. Notice his clever answer, as well as his slighting reference to his wife. What did he expect?

J. Verse 19. Notice this was done through the Spirit. Ashkelon = a different Philistine city on the Mediterranean. He goes home in a huff.

K. Verse 20. She is given to his “best man.” This was in accordance with the laws of Khammerabi. Their custom included a “time” for a woman to marry when she was marriageable, and so the father does this.

V. Samson was not satisfied with a “good girl” of Israel, but wanted a “bad girl” of the Philistines. He tried to be clever with wicked men, and found out that not surprisingly they did not play fair. His new wife is far from a true partner for him. He ends up with no wife and nothing but a burning desire for revenge. May God grant to His people the wisdom to choose a Godly person to marry!