

EPISODE NO. 109

Judg. 14:5-20

The Riddle about the Lion

5 Samson went down with his father and his mother to Timnah. They went as far as the vineyards of Timnah.

Later, suddenly, a young lion came roaring at Samson! 6 The Spirit of the Always-Present One entered Samson with great power. Samson tore the young lion apart with his bare hands! For Samson, it was as easy as tearing apart a young goat. But Samson did NOT tell his father or his mother what he had done. 7 Then Samson went down to Timnah. There he talked to the Philistine girl, and he liked her.

8 Several days later, Samson went back to marry her. On his way, he went over to look at the body of the dead lion. Look, he found a swarm of bees in it. They had made some honey. 9 Samson got some of the honey with his hands. He walked along, eating it. When he came to his parents, he gave some to them. They ate it, too. But Samson did NOT tell them that he had taken the honey from the body of the dead lion.

10 Samson's father went down to meet the Philistine girl. (The custom was for the groom to give a feast. So, Samson gave a banquet.) 11 When the Philistines saw Samson, they sent 30 men to be with Samson.

12 Then Samson said to the 30 men, "Let me tell you a riddle. This wedding feast will last for seven days. Try to guess the answer during that time. If you can, then I will give you 30 linen shirts. I will also give you 30 sets of clothes. 13 However, if you cannot tell me the answer, then you must pay ME! You must give me 30 linen shirts and 30 sets of clothes!"

So they said to Samson, "Tell us your riddle. We will listen to it."

14 Samson said to the Philistine men,

"Out of the eater comes something to eat.
Out of the strong comes forth something sweet."

The 30 men tried for three days to figure it out, but they could not find the answer.

15 On the fourth day, they went to Samson's fiancée. They said, "Did you invite us here to make us poor!? Trick your husband-to-be into telling us the answer to the riddle. If you don't, then we will burn you up — and everyone else in your father's household!"

16 So Samson's fiancée went to him and began to cry. She said, "You only hate me! You don't really love me! You told the riddle to my people, but you won't tell ME the answer!"

But Samson said to her, "Look, I haven't even told my father or my mother. Why should I tell you!?"

17 Samson's fiancée wept for the rest of the seven days of the feast. So, Samson finally gave her the answer on the seventh day. He told her, because she continued to nag him. Then she revealed the answer to the riddle to her own people.

18 Before sunset, on the seventh day of the feast, the Philistine men of the town said to Samson: "What is sweeter than honey? And, what is stronger than a lion?"

Then Samson said to them, "If you had not plowed with my little cow, you would NOT have solved my riddle!"

19 The Spirit of the Always-Present One entered Samson in a powerful way. Samson went down to the city of Ashkelon. He killed 30 Philistine men and took all their belongings. He gave those sets of clothes to the men who had guessed the riddle. Samson was very angry. Then Samson went to his father's house. 20 (Now Samson's fiancée was given away to Samson's best man to become his wife.)