

## THE RIDDLE OF SAMSON – PART 2

--JUDGES 14:1-20--

### INTRODUCTION:

Last week we began chapter 14 of Judges and began our look at the adult life of Samson and the fact that his life is a riddle. He had a divine calling on his life before he was even conceived, and that calling was that he would be a Nazirite to God from the womb and that he would begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines. As we began to look at this young man who is to be a judge in Israel we were introduced to a self-centered, rebellious young man who made his own rules so that he gets what he wants. We learned that Samson lived on the basis of his senses and according to his standards, instead of allowing God to guide him and living according to the Law of the LORD. The riddle of Samson is seen in the brilliant irony of the author who describes for us a self-centered rebel driven by selfish interests, doing whatever he pleases with no respect for his parents or for the claim of God on his life, but in the process, he ends up doing the will of God. This morning we will look at his wedding, a seven-day affair.

#### I. THE WAGER (Judges 14:10-13)

- a. Last week we ended with Samson \_\_\_\_\_ himself and then defiling his parents.
- b. We are told in the end of verse 10 that Samson made a \_\_\_\_\_ there, in Timnah, most likely in the home of the parents of the bride.
- c. Who were the participants of this feast to \_\_\_\_\_ his wedding?
- d. It does not seem that Samson takes offense at these thirty men around him, instead he makes sport of them and the situation and proposes a \_\_\_\_\_.

#### II. THE RIDDLE (Judges 14:14-16)

- a. Samson's riddle is short and \_\_\_\_\_, in Hebrew it consists of six words arranged in two parallel lines of three words each.

- b. After three days of pursuing every possible lead that they can come up with, they are \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Left with no choice the woman pleads with her husband for \_\_\_\_\_.
- d. Samson's response to his betrothed wife's pleadings is rather \_\_\_\_\_, he responds that he has not told his parents so why should he tell her.

#### III. THE BETRAYAL (Judges 14:17-20)

- a. The woman does not \_\_\_\_\_ up.
- b. The thirty companions of Samson time their approach to Samson for the most dramatic effect, they come to him just before \_\_\_\_\_ on the seventh day of the feast.
- c. Samson is totally insensitive to the theological implications of his own \_\_\_\_\_ and the companions' response.
- d. Verses 19-20 give us the climax of the chapter. The LORD had determined to stir up the \_\_\_\_\_ between Israel and the Philistines and it begins here.

### CONCLUSION:

As we come to the close of this chapter, we must recognize the importance of this account for the picture that it paints for us of Samson. First, we must recognize Samson's trustworthiness to his word, having lost the wager even though unfairly he provides the so-called companions with the promised change of clothes. Apart from this one feature, the rest of the picture that is painted of Samson is ugly. Samson is disrespectful to his parents, he has no concern for his Nazirite status, he has no loyalty to his own people. He is rude to his wife, flippant with his tongue, and driven by lust and selfishness. The only way in which good can come from this man is by the LORD overpowering him with His Spirit and driving him to do the task of delivering his people, something which Samson is not naturally inclined to do.

Theologically, we must recognize that Samson represents the nation of Israel. This person—uniquely set apart, called, and gifted for divine service—not only associates and mixes with the enemy, but

he also seeks to live among them and become one of them by marriage. Just as the nation of Israel was set apart, called to be God's people, and gifted to serve Him only, but they failed to drive out the Canaanites and they began to become like them by inter-marrying them and adopting their gods as their own. But the LORD is in control and this event in Samson's history ends exactly where God wanted it to end. The LORD stirs up tension between Israel and the Philistines. Unaware of their roles in divine providence the characters are creating the very situation the LORD had planned. At the end of this chapter the work against the Philistines has begun. Samson is back in his father's house, and the adventure in mixed marriage has collapsed. The woman has betrayed her husband to her people, the husband insults and belittles his wife by calling her a heifer, and the father-in-law has given his daughter to another man, a Philistine man. What was planned as an interracial marriage turns into war. Again, we see God's grace and mercy on display as He seeks to draw His people back to Himself, and He will use someone like Samson to do it, in spite of Samson. God's purposes will be fulfilled because He is Sovereign, and He is not a distant God, but One that is very near.