

## Timeline of Truth: Samson, the Selfish Judge – The Weakness of Samson (Judges 14:1-20)

<p><sup>1</sup> Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines.</p>	<p><i>Timnath</i>, though occupied by the Philistines, was only about four mi. SW of Zorah, Samson's home. – Ryrie Study Bible</p>	<p><b>1. Samson's Feet and Eyes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>He went to Timnah</i></li> <li>b. <i>He saw a woman</i></li> </ol>	
<p><sup>2</sup> 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."</p>		<p><b>2. Samson Demands a Foreign Wife</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>I have seen a woman...</i></li> <li>b. <i>Get her for me...</i></li> <li>c. <i>Desired to marry from the oppressors!</i></li> </ol>	
<p><sup>3</sup> 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?" (Deut 7:1-8)</p>		<p><b>3. Samson's Parents' Question His Demand</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>Is there no woman</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Among the daughters of your brethren?</i></li> <li>• <i>Among all my people?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>b. <i>That you must get a wife from ... Philistines?</i></li> </ol>	<p><i>Culture? Ethnicity? God's prohibition in Deut 7:1-8 is not mentioned</i></p>
<p>And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well." Lit. "right for my eyes"</p>		<p><b>4. Samson Refuses to Change His Mind</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>He was driven by what <u>pleased him</u></i></li> </ol>	
<p><sup>4</sup> 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.</p>		<p><b>5. God's Underlying Control</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>It was of the LORD</i></li> <li>b. <i>Seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines</i></li> </ol>	
<p><sup>5</sup> So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah.</p>		<p><b>6. Samson and His Parents Proceed to Timnah</b></p>	
<p>Now <i>to his surprise</i>, a young lion <i>came</i> roaring against him. <sup>6</sup> And the Spirit of the LORD came (lit. "rushed") mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though <i>he had</i> nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.</p>		<p><b>7. Samson Is Attacked by a Young Lion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>God's Enablement: The Spirit of the LORD</i></li> <li>b. <i>Samson's Strength: Came mightily upon him (first time?)</i></li> <li>c. <i>The Result: Tears the lion apart easily by his bare hands</i></li> <li>d. <i>Samson's Silence: He did not tell his parents about this</i></li> </ol>	
<p><sup>7</sup> Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.</p>		<p><b>8. Samson Speaks with the Philistine Woman</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>He continues to be driven by what pleases him</i></li> </ol>	
<p><sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave <i>some</i> 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.</p>		<p><b>9. Samson Violates His Nazarite Vow for the First Time</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>He Returned: As he returned to get the Philistine woman</i></li> <li>b. <i>He Found: He finds bees and honey in the lion carcass</i></li> <li>c. <i>He Ate: He ate of the honey</i></li> <li>d. <i>He Shared: He gave honey to his parents, and they ate it</i></li> <li>e. <i>His Silence: He did not tell his parents where he found it</i></li> </ol>	
<p><sup>10</sup> So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so. <sup>11</sup> And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. <sup>12</sup> 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." <sup>13</sup> "But if you cannot explain <i>it</i> 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." <sup>14</sup> 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.</p>		<p><b>10. Samson Holds a Wedding Feast and Gives a Riddle</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>The Celebration (10a)</i> Another vow violation: "The word for feast, <i>mišteh</i>, in this context refers to a seven-day drinking bout at the home of the bride's parents." Block, D. I. (1999). <i>Judges, Ruth</i> (Vol. 6, p. 431). Nashville: Broadman &amp; Holman Publishers</li> <li>b. <i>The Culture (10b) – Becoming like those around him.</i></li> <li>c. <i>The Companions (11)</i> Although we cannot tell how Samson received these thirty "companions," in view of all these factors it seems best to interpret the Philistines' response to Samson as a potentially hostile act. When they saw Samson, they were afraid of him. Not taking any chances, they surrounded him with bodyguards. (Block, p. 432)</li> <li>d. <i>Samson's Suggests a Wager Over a Riddle (12-13a)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>If you successfully solve it in 7 days, I give you 30 garments &amp; 30 changes of clothing</i></li> <li>ii. <i>If you are not successful, you give me the same</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>e. <i>They Agree to Samson's Wager (13b)</i></li> <li>f. <i>Samson Uses His Sin as a Riddle (14a)</i></li> <li>g. <i>In 3 Days, the Men Cannot Solve the Riddle (14b)</i></li> </ol>	

<p><sup>15</sup> 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? <i>Is that not so?</i>"</p>	<p><b>11. The Men Get Desperate to Solve Samson's Riddle</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Time had almost run out (told her at the beginning?)</li> <li>b. They command her to find out the riddle from Samson</li> <li>c. They threaten to burn her and her entire family</li> <li>d. They question her original reason for marrying Samson</li> </ul>
<p><sup>16</sup> 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 <i>it</i> to me."  And he said to her,  "Look, I have not explained <i>it</i> to my father or my mother;  so should I explain <i>it</i> to you?"</p>	<p><b>12. Samson's Wife Tries to Manipulate Him for the Answer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Questioning His Love</li> <li>b. Questioning His Loyalty to Her as Wife</li> <li>c. Samson Does Not Yield (Yet)</li> </ul>
<p><sup>17</sup> 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.</p>	<p><b>13. Samson Gives In to His Wife</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Samson Gives in to Her Pressing</li> <li>b. Samson Explains the Riddle to Her Wife</li> <li>c. Samson's Wife Shares the Answer with the Men</li> </ul>
<p><sup>18</sup> 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?"</p>	<p><b>14. The Men Give the Riddle's Answer to Samson</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Before the time ended</li> <li>b. They explain the honey in the lion</li> </ul>
<p>And he said to them:  "If you had not plowed with my heifer,  You would not have solved my riddle!"</p>	<p><b>15. Samson Reacts to Their Answer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. He recognizes the way they found the answer</li> <li>b. He ignores his part in their finding out</li> </ul>
<p><sup>19</sup> 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 <i>clothing</i> to those who had explained the riddle.</p>	<p><b>16. Samson Is Moved by God to Pay His Debt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. God's Enablement: The Spirit of the LORD</li> <li>b. Samson's Strength: Came mightily upon him</li> <li>c. Samson's Trip: He traveled to Ashkelon  Ashkelon, a Philistine city, on the Mediterranean coast about 23 miles away.  – Ryrie Study Bible</li> <li>d. Samson's Ability: Killed 30 of their men</li> <li>e. Samson's Action: Took their clothing</li> <li>f. Samson's Payment: Gave clothing to riddle-solving men</li> </ul>
<p>So his anger was aroused,  and he went back up to his father's house.</p>	<p><b>17. Samson Becomes Angry, and Returns Home</b></p>
<p><sup>20</sup> And Samson's wife was <i>given</i> to his companion, who had been his best man.</p>	<p><b>18. Samson's Wife Is Given to Another Man</b></p>

**Lessons:**

1. God is behind the scenes, allowing people to choose, but ultimately controlling the outcomes.
2. Samson follows his desires rather than God's directions. He follows his senses rather than God's instructions. We need to follow God rather than our own hearts. On their own, our desires and decisions will lead us away from God. (Prov 3:5-6; 4:20-27)
3. We need to be separate from the world in close associations, in actions, in conduct (Deut 7:1-8, 2 Cor 6:14-18)
4. Teach about marriage! We need to decide to live for God in our relationships from the very beginning – where we go; what we do; who we are with all add up. Who we marry makes a huge, eternal difference!  
Judges 3:5-6 Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. <sup>6</sup> And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and they served their gods.
5. Wives/women can have great influence over a man. Men need to guard their eyes and hearts. Women need to measure and guard their influence.