

Judges 08-07-18a

This is Friday, the 18th of July 2008. We're in the book of Judges, chapter 14, the story of Samson. We'll take a moment as we begin to focus our attention, give ourselves the opportunity to avail ourselves of God's grace in the person of the Holy Spirit and the truth of God's word.

Shall we pray? Father, how grateful we are for another opportunity to set aside the daily tasks and concerns and responsibilities and priorities that rest upon our shoulders to spend time in fellowship and in edification and in the study of your word. We thank you for the gift of your spirit, which we have received through your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and died for us and daily makes intercession on our behalf as he awaits the day when you give the word for him to come and return to take us to himself. We thank you for this intervening period.

We thank you that we can learn and grow and be prepared for an eternal future with you. We thank you for the passage that is before us tonight and we pray that you will bless us as we study it together. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Samson has been introduced to us. He had a miraculous narrative, angels, his parents, smoke, fire.

We studied the sacrifices and the elements thereof last week. It is no accident that the motif of sacrifice is a part of that introductory section. We have reviewed the two sacrifices that pertain.

The goat is representative of, although it does not conform to the specifications of, the whole burnt offering or ola of Leviticus chapter 1. A little bit of pop quiz review. What is the meaning of the whole burnt offering of Leviticus chapter 1? What is it for? Is it a sin offering? You sin and you go down and offer it? It is not. It is not the sin offering.

It is the offering of acceptance. It is the offering of dedication of self. It is the Romans 12, 1 and 2 offering.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. This is your reasonable service. This, which we perform for ourselves as our own priests in this age, was accomplished by the Levitical priests on a voluntary basis for the Israelites in the Old Testament day.

Voluntary sacrifice. The entire animal is offered. It is reflecting acceptance.

Read Leviticus 1. It says to be accepted. To be accepted. It goes all the way back to God talking to Cain.

If you do well, will you not be accepted? If not, the croucher is at the door. Sin. It wants to have dominion over you.

You must master it. The fulfillment of the first great command to love the Lord, entire heart, entire soul, entire strength, is reflected in the offering of that offering. That is the olah, the whole burnt offering.

Entire dedication. This was the thing with Jephthah's daughter. She was not immolated.

She was not burnt alive. She was holy and entirely dedicated to the service of God. She could not marry.

She could not split her time serving God and taking care of a household. Growing flax and raising children and tending to her husband and so on. She bewailed her virginity because she would never marry.

All of her efforts, all of her time, all of her life would be devoted to God. On the order of... Order, that's a good word. You know how nuns do? They say, well, I'm sort of married.

That's what they do. Nuns, at least last I heard, don't get married because they consider themselves to be married to Christ. And that's their entire thing.

That was Jephthah's daughter. That's the olah type of dedication. That's what he promised God.

I will make an olah out of the first thing I see. So, that's the goat. There was also a grain offering, Leviticus chapter 2. Minka.

What is the meaning of the minka? Leviticus chapter 1, dedication of self. I am acceptable before God because I have a heart for God. I love God.

I dedicate myself to God. I avail myself of His grace. I recognize that there is a way made for relationship with God through all of the elements of that sacrifice.

So now, minka chapter 2, the grain offering. The easiest way to remember what it's for is to remember the elements. What are the four parts that make up the minka? Flour, oil, come on, help me out here.

Frankincense and salt. Flour is refined grain. You work it with your hands.

You grind it. You put some effort into it. You manufacture flour out of grain.

God causes the grain to grow. You manufacture flour by the work of your hands. Oil always represents the Holy Spirit.

Olive oil. That flour, that work of the hands is not acceptable. It is not useful.

It is not usable apart from the presence of that oil which transforms it into something that it was not before. Frankincense, what does incense always represent in scripture? From Genesis to Revelation, what does it represent? Prayers of the saints. If you go back to Abraham and the smoking pot, you can go all the way to Revelation and the bowl of incense.

Prayers of the saints. Our work must be accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit and prayerfully. In everything, by prayer, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

And then the fourth element, salt. What's unique about salt? It's about the only inorganic thing I can think of that we consume. It is permanent and unchangeable.

You can find salt that crystallized a million years ago and it's just as good as salt that crystallized yesterday. It is unchanging. It is permanent.

And it imparts permanence. It preserves. Salt, pork, back before the days of refrigeration, you would heavily salt beef.

The British Navy would salt their beef and put it in casks and it would keep for months and months and months. Or so they hoped. When it didn't, they had to eat it anyway.

So, permanence, eternity, salt of the covenant. Let your conversation be seasoned with salt. There ought to be some element of our contact and our conversation with one another that reminds us that we are looking to the future.

We live in hope. We are motivated by treasure in heaven, by the opportunity to be pleasing in God's sight, to hear those words, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. And if we keep our mind on the eternity of our existence, Jesus Christ has redeemed us, we have been given eternal life, and we seek for glory and honor and immortality.

Romans chapter 2. That's what we look for. Glory, honor, and immortality. And those are the people to whom God grants eternal life.

That's what salt represents. Isn't it a great thing that we can perform actions represented by that flower, in the power of the Spirit, represented by the oil, conditioned and guided, and reflecting divine viewpoint and our understanding in prayer, and there is that eternal component that is mixed with our works, and it is acceptable in God's sight. Things that we do, even though we are corrupt, even though we are fallen, we can do things that are pleasing in God's sight.

It is all of grace. God has provided every one of those things to us and for us. That's what those two offerings represent.

It's hugely important. That's why they are mentioned. That's why, even in their spiritual decrepitude, and backwardness and ignorance, when Manoah and his wife are there, and they lay this goat on the rock, and they put the grain there, God converts that goat to an olah.

He converts that grain to a minka by the presence of that messenger, the angel of the Lord going up in the smoke. Everything that was missing, everything that fell short, is compensated for by God's messenger going up in the smoke. When that smoke hits heaven, representatively

speaking, what's God going to see? His holy messenger in the midst of the smoke, and that is going to render that an acceptable sacrifice in the same way that when Jesus touched a leper, he didn't become defiled, the leper became clean.

And God's holy messenger, bringing that offering, as it were, before God on behalf of Manoah, renders it acceptable. In the same way that God the Holy Spirit now takes our prayers, Romans chapter 8, with groanings that cannot be uttered. We do not know how to pray as we ought.

Our incense isn't a fragrance in God's nostrils, but the Holy Spirit makes it so. God's messenger. Huge amount of meaning in that introductory section.

And here's the thing. That's a review. But who has the sacrifices? To whom pertains these regulations and these ordinances and these rituals of the law of Moses? Whose possession is that? It's the nation of Israel.

And there's something going on here in this introductory section of Samuel that is a commentary and is an explication and a symbolic revelation of what God is doing in Israel. What the status is in Israel. And that's going to continue now.

Because remember, in the original, there are no chapter breaks. We're in chapter 14. We were in chapter 13.

Well, in the original, there's no chapters, there's no versification. It's just strings and strings of Hebrew letters. It looks so neat on a page.

If you ever get the chance, we went to the... What was that thing we went to up there in the Eureka Springs? We went to the Christ of the Ozarks and the Passion Play area. And they have a Bible museum there. And you go down, and they've got glass cases and they've got representative samples.

And I've seen these other places, but this is the most recent. And they had some ancient documents in there, either originals or copies. And you could see the Hebrew writing.

And that's the way it looked. That's how it looked when the early scribes first converted it to the square Aramaic script. You won't find any manuscripts in the old Hebrew script that Moses wrote with and that the prophets wrote with, because those have all perished.

Our earliest copies are the Dead Sea Scrolls. And they are all in the square Aramaic script with one exception. When you run across the Tetragrammaton, the name of God, in some of the old manuscripts, the scribes were so reverent that they didn't even want to convert God's name out of the old alphabet.

And so you'd be going along square Aramaic, square Aramaic, page after page after page of Aramaic script. And then when you get to the name of Yahweh, the name of the Lord, it's in the old, Yod-Heh-Vav-Heh, and it's cryptic and it's special. It's the name of God.

But these pages of just letters, no vowel points, no real word divisions, and sometimes when you run into textual difficulties, retroverted back into the original and you find that just by re-dividing the word, what if the scribes got that wrong? What if they forgot? What if they messed up? It's been how many thousand years now? You can go back sometimes and say, you know what, this psalm verse that says, kiss the sun lest he be angry and you perish in the way, and it doesn't make any sense in context. You go back and re-divide those letters and pay attention to the meter of the psalm that has been illustrated in the preceding lines. And suddenly the meaning just jumps out at you and you say, oh, well, that's what this should have been.

I wrote a whole paper on that one time. But here, chapter 14 is just a continuation of that introduction we had in chapter 13. What does it say? Samson is now a grown man.

And Samson, the spirit began to move upon him. He lives there at the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtoel. 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. Why does he go to his parents? Because you're in the age, in some cultures it still takes place where parents arrange the marriages.

The father of the groom would go talk to the father of the bride. They would negotiate money or goods. Dowry and so forth would change hands.

And a contract would be entered into. And it was a relationship. So Samson can't just go down and say, hey baby, let's elope.

He has to go to his parents and they have to contract with this girl's parents. And even across national and ethnic and cultural borders, this is still the way it's done. So, get her for me as a wife.

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? As I mentioned before, the only ancient people in the Old Testament mentioned as uncircumcised are the Philistines. It doesn't say the uncircumcised Moabites. It doesn't say the uncircumcised Hittites.

It doesn't say the uncircumcised Assyrians or Babylonians. The only people ever described as uncircumcised are the Philistines. Most of the people in this region were Semitic.

And the practice of circumcision goes all the way back. And even some of the Hamitic peoples, the Egyptians, practiced circumcision. You wonder why that is? Well, Egypt had influence from Semites.

But the Philistines had come down from the area of Greece and Crete and Cyprus and that area

down. And they were from a whole different background. They had separated off way back shortly after the days of Noah.

They had no such tradition. So they are known by this. Now, without getting too detailed here, if you think about this, suppose there had been a Philistine man who had wanted to marry an Israelite woman.

And the Philistine man's parents had come over to Mahana Dan and had come to the woman's parents and said, Hey, my son, Goliath here, wants to marry your daughter. The family might say, Well, look, he's an uncircumcised Philistine. And you can understand this because you're thinking about what the grandkids are going to be and so on.

And there's this element of contact with an uncircumcised Philistine. This is the reverse. This is an Israelite, a Nazirite.

You know that all the basic covenant regulations have been observed with him. He's not uncircumcised. And he's going to go marry a Philistine woman for whom circumcision is not an issue.

So why do the parents say, Why are you getting a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines? Because it's not the physical condition that is being spoken of. And so then you say, Well, so are they on some sort of moral high ground where they say, Well, these people are... Why do they say this? The Israelites are in a terrible state of spiritual apathy and indifference. Why does this epithet get applied? This is bigotry.

The Philistines are resented because they're in power. The Israelites have abandoned their spiritual heritage. God promised them that one of them would put to flight a thousand that they could take possession.

God would drive out the nations from before them. They have failed. They have fallen short.

They have broken their covenant obligations with God. God, therefore, has not fulfilled His side in driving the nations out. They are now in about the fourth out of the five cycles of discipline that God promised Israel.

If you do not hearken to My word, if you do not return to Me, you're going to go down, down, down. And they're in about the fourth level of down out of five. And they are oppressed and ruled over by the Philistines.

Notice verse 4. God was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines, for at that time, the Philistines had dominion over Israel. People don't like being dominated. They don't like being oppressed.

They don't like being taken advantage of. This town of Timnah sat right on the border between Dan and Judah. You can find this if you go back to Joshua.

It's mentioned as one of the border towns of Judah. Remember, Judah was the one tribe where we actually traced out all of those towns and we drew that border. We looked up the meaning of each of those names.

And Timnah is one of those towns. And it is a Philistine town. And the Danites have had to move eight miles to the east to stay out of Philistine territory.

And so every time it says that Samson went down to Timnah, well, he's making an eight-mile hike west because this area where he is is that distance away. Timnah, by the way, I don't think I mentioned this last time, the word Timnah comes from the Hebrew verb manah, M-A-N-A-H. That's sort of a homonym.

We've talked about manah. The Israelites looking at the food on the ground each morning and they said manah. That's two words, ma and nah, separate.

That means what is this? What is this? That's what manah means. What is it? This is different. This is M-A-N-A-H.

This is the word that means to count, to make an accounting, to make a reckoning, to ascertain value. For example, remember the money that is the minah? So many minahs. It comes from this same root.

How about the handwriting on the wall in Daniel's day? Remember those four words? What were they? M-A-N-A-H, M-A-N-A-H, Tekel, Upharsin. Well, the M-A-N-A-H means weighed, weighed, accounted, evaluated. The same word.

Timnah is the word that means accounted. There is an accounting. And it's not an accident.

In the same way that Manoah's name is not an accident. And the names of these towns and so on are not accidents. It is time God is going to make an accounting.

God has an issue and is seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines because they have been weighed and His people have been weighed and found wanting. And He is going to bring the Israelites into conflict with the Philistines in a big way. This is the beginning of their deliverance.

But in the beginning, it's going to get worse before it gets better. What's the situation in Israel as we speak here at the beginning of chapter 14? Are they at war with the Philistines? Are there pitched battles being fought? Are there generals running around? Are there widows mourning the loss of their husbands and children mourning the loss of their fathers because there's been conflict? What's the problem in Israel with the Philistines? Well, what's Samuel trying? I mean Samson. They're literally in bed with them.

They've accommodated. They've compromised. They are blending.

They're starting to intermarry. People decry it. They say, oh, isn't this terrible? But notice

Samson's father is going to go down and contract this marriage.

There's sort of a token verbal resistance, but there it's an accommodation. The Philistines are infiltrating and there's no resistance. There's no active conflict.

And God says, before I can deliver you, there's got to be some conflict. You need to stop compromising. You need to stop integrating.

You need to stop intermingling. It's the same thing when they come back from the Babylonian captivity in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. What do they have to do? Break up these marriages with the invaders and with the people of the land.

You've got to get back to separation. Sanctification at its root means separation. Come ye out from among them and be ye separate.

Touch not the unclean thing, etc. So, we've already been told this is the beginning of deliverance. And it says in verse 4 that God was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines.

The Philistines have dominion over Israel and Israel is just rolling over. You don't want to have a dog that at the first sign of conflict rolls over and sticks his feet in the air. Not if you want a watchdog.

Not if you want a dog that your girls can walk among strangers with and have it on a leash if somebody takes an undue interest or something. You want a dog that's going to growl and bark and crunch somebody's wrist into powder and create some sort of fear and havoc. You want a dog that can be mean when he needs to be mean.

That can scare people when they need to be scared. That can give them an inappropriate level of respect. You don't want a dog that he's walking along and at the first sign of trouble he just rolls over and starts whining.

What kind of a dog is that? It might be a nice companion, but it's not going to be anything that you can use for security. So this is the attitude though that the Israelites have adopted with regard to the Philistines. They're just rolling over and playing dead.

Let's not conflict. You want the town of Timnah? Okay, fine. I know God assigned it as a border town through Joshua, but hey, we'll move.

We can go eight miles to the east. We'll get out of your way. And that's what they're doing.

They're just rolling over. There's no fight. There's no resistance.

There's no spirit. So the beginning of deliverance is to create some conflict, to interrupt this peaceful coexistence, and it is of God. What's going to happen in the middle of the tribulation period, by the way, when the Antichrist has made a covenant, a seven-year covenant? He's

made a seven-year peace treaty with Israel.

And what's going to happen in the middle of that seven-year week? Antichrist is going to break the covenant. And this is what these people need. They need to get out of these towns.

Don't go inside to get your coat. Flee to the hills. Get out, because there's about to be a reckoning, and you can't be intermingled, and you can't be intermarried, and you can't be dwelling amongst.

Did Lot miraculously get preserved, and his was the only house that didn't fall when Sodom and Gomorrah got destroyed? God sent angels and said, come out. Get out of there. I'm going to destroy this place.

There's a time to be salt and be the preservative, and there's a time to get out, and if you don't, you become salt. So, that's what's happening here. I have seen a woman in Timnah.

Timnah, a counting. There's a reckoning about to take place. And it's a reckoning for Israel, and it's a reckoning for the Philistines.

How many times does Timnah get mentioned in these first half dozen verses? Count them. Look for the capital T's. How many times is Timnah mentioned? It seems to me a little bit repetitive, especially at the beginning.

Doesn't it seem like that to you? Samson went down to Timnah. He saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of Philistines. He went back to his father and mother and said, I have seen a woman in Timnah.

I couldn't get Samson's mother's name to save my soul. I went through a whole chapter in 13 and never got his mother's name, but I'm getting this town five times. Five times in five verses I have Timnah repeated.

Now, if you see a word in a passage repeated five times, you've got to pay attention. It's there for a reason. It's not accidental.

So, we note what it means, and we note the number of times it's repeated. What is the number five? There are two numbers associated with Israel, five and twelve. Twelve is their physical existence, twelve tribes, twelve apostles, twelve foundations.

Five is the number of their spiritual education, the five books of the law, the five fingers in their hand by which they are supposed to exercise and carry out the commands of God. And so, this accounting has to do with Israel and with their spiritual education. They will not listen to the five books of the law, so God is going to give them a different kind of education.

They're going to get a practical education. How many cities of the Philistines were there? There you go. So, Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren among all my people that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines? This is just sour grapes.

We already resent the Philistines. Are you going to make me have them for in-laws? That's all there is to this. They don't care about the actual uncircumcision.

After all, he's marrying a woman. And it doesn't have anything to do with moral superiority because they're not any better than the Philistines. It's strictly resentment because of the oppression.

Boy, you can see this same attitude at the mall any day of the week. Get her for me, for she pleases me well. Child telling the parent, I want it, get it for me.

Dangerous mark of spiritual lassitude. A vacuous, flaccid, anemic, weak spiritual condition has children ordering parents around. I was waiting for Rebecca one time, I told you this about a year ago.

She wasn't down there getting her braces adjusted or something. I was sitting in the car and a woman was bringing her daughter to the orthodontist to have something done. I was sitting there.

I had the shade up so people couldn't... It was an accident. I was just trying to keep the sun off of me. I was working on my laptop and I couldn't see the screen.

So I put the shade up. Well, this woman and her daughter wound up standing right in front of my car having this argument. And the level of sass and back talk that that teenage girl, 15 years old I would guess, gave her mother was... I couldn't believe it.

And I thought I was pretty familiar with the modern day. I could not believe what this woman was taking from her daughter. It was like the roles were reversed.

Well, this is what Samson is doing here. It is a sign of spiritual anemia when children order their parents around. What does the New Testament tell us about that relationship? Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Parents obeying their children, not in the Lord, is wrong. And that's just the biblical viewpoint. So Samson tells his father for the second time, get her for me, for she literally is right in my eyes.

Two different times in the book of Judges. In chapter 15 and later on we have the statement made that everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes. Well, this Philistine woman is right in Samson's eyes.

It's the very same phrase, just slight variation of it. And right, by the way, is an interesting word in Hebrew. This is from the word yashar.

Y-A-S-H-A-R And you know what the Germans did to us? There is no Y in German. They don't say Ya, they say Jah. They don't have a Y. And when they tried to say Yahweh, they had to put a J where the Y was.

And they don't have a W either, they have a V. So they got Jahweh, and then they put the consonants from Adonai, and they got Jehovah. And that whole word is a complete made-up construct because they misread the Hebrew text that was purposely there with the consonants of the tetragrammaton and the vowel points of the word Adonai because the scribes would never read God's personal name. They would always substitute Adonai.

And to remind the scribe, they put the vowel points of Adonai around the consonants of Yahweh. But it's a non-word. It's a special mark in the text.

But the Germans didn't know that. So they were trying to sound out this word, and they can't say Y, and they can't say W, and they misread the vowel points, and they end up with Jehovah. And so now you've got Jehovah's Witnesses, and it's just fitting.

That's a good name for them because that's about the level of their understanding. So this is Yashar. But it comes across to us even now in English in a form.

You've seen one of God's names for Israel in the Old Testament is Jeshurun. Remember, there's a passage where it says, Jeshurun kicked, and so on. Jeshurun.

Yashar means to be upright or to be straight. To be right is to be upright. And when he says she is upright, she is Yashar.

She is Yashra, actually. Yashara. Well, Yashurun is the name that God gave to Israel, and it was an irony.

It was sort of a dig when God called Israel Jeshurun because Jeshurun means, oh, upright one. It's like Gideon hiding in the winepress trying to thrash, saying, hello there, mighty man of valor. It's a dig.

It's kind of a poke. And God calling Israel Jeshurun, that's what Israel was supposed to be and what they weren't. Samson calls this Philistine woman upright, right in my eyes, and of course in his eyes, and this is not just her physical beauty or anything like that, because actually she would have had to have been built like a soda straw if this was literal, because it means straight, not crooked.

Straight, not curvy. But she pleases me. She conforms to my standard of this is what I'm looking for.

Every man did what was right in his own eyes means everybody did what he was comfortable with, what he thought was good for him. She's good for me. She's what I want.

Get her for me. She is right in my eyes. She is Yashurah.

Well, let me step back and make a suggestion about what's going on in this passage from a higher point of view. The Philistines are obviously the enemy. This is the wrong road.

This is the opposition. This is everything that Israel is supposed to stay away from, supposed to defeat, conquer, and eliminate from the land. That's pretty easy.

The Israelites themselves are the Israelites themselves. Samson is the new leader. He is the God-ordained leader.

He will deliver my people Israel. Well, what is he doing? He is going in the wrong direction. He's not looking for a wife among the people.

He is unaware of his Nazarite call. He is unaware of his opportunity before God. He isn't praying.

He's not seeking out anything at Shiloh, which he could easily have done. He is leading in the wrong direction. He is going in the wrong direction.

And he represents the apostate leadership in Israel in any generation, in any historic time of the nation of Israel. That's what Samson represents. He's supposed to be doing one thing.

He's supposed to be aware of his divine commission, his divine authorization, his divine responsibility to himself and to the people. He throws all that out the window and goes for what he wants, does what's right in his own eyes. Well, that's important to establish.

It's pretty easy to see right now, but watch. His father and mother did not know that it was of the Lord. He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines.

Now notice, God is going to do something to the enemy with an apostate leader in Israel. God is going to use Samson against the Philistines, and Samson is all messed up. It doesn't make sense.

It's kind of like two wrongs will make a right. You've got a bad guy in Israel going against the bad guys in the Philistines, and God is going to work deliverance out of that. Well, just keep hold of that thought as we go forward.

Now, we've read this. I read it a week or two ago. To his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him.

They're on their way down to Timnah. He's going down with his father and mother. Now think about Israel.

The general population, of course, gives rise to these leaders, to whoever they are, their governors, their mayors, their priests, their scribes, their Pharisees, whoever they might be. And the father and mother are sort of at the behest. You will do this for me.

I want you to conform to my will, and so on. So they're going down to Timnah, and they come to the vineyards of Timnah. To his surprise... Now remember, in the vineyards, there's a lot of vegetation.

There's rows. Mom and dad stop and say, well, we're going to let our sandals cool off here a little bit. Samson says, well, you know, I'm going to go behind the bushes here.

And he leaves, and they're separate. They're separated by some distance. Apparently a pretty good distance.

Maybe a couple hundred yards. Samson is a lot stronger than they are. They're old.

He's young. They're weak. He's strong.

He goes away. He's off in another part of the vineyard. And a lion came roaring against him.

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. This vineyard was on the way. He went back.

He thought, well, I wonder whatever happened to that. 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. Of course, it's the same thing. He makes an accompanied trip.

He leaves them in a safe spot. He goes back to the same spot. This is like the second time through.

But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. He didn't tell them that he had killed the lion the first time, and he didn't tell them where the honey came from the second time. So his father went down to the woman.

His father has gone ahead and is contracting this marriage. Samson gave a feast for young men used so to do. Well, we'll get into this feast.

This is kind of the next phase of the story. But here's my question. Why so much detail on this lion, bees, and honey episode? You figure, well, it's necessary to explain the riddle thing that happens on down because it explains the question and the answer.

But it just seems like an awful lot of detail. It seems like if this weren't important, the author or the editor or somebody could have kind of compressed this down. Samson gave them a riddle.

They could not answer it. But the wife whittled it out of him. We wouldn't have to have all of these details.

Scripture has given us this scenario. So it invites scrutiny. It invites analysis.

It invites interpretation. So you think, well, book of Judges. How much have we got of the Bible at this point, the original recipients that got the book of Judges? What would they have made of this? Samson goes off, and he's attacked by a lion.

And he deals with this lion. One of the keys is the verb used for this. It says, he was surprised by a young lion that came roaring against him.

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. Well, you think now, I don't think people in Israel were kind of in the habit of, hey, look, a goat. And they would just rip it apart.

I mean, what is this goat ripping? Why does it say like you rip apart a goat? I just don't get the connection. I mean, goat ripping was not a thing that people did. So I thought, well, what's going on here? So we go and we take a look at this verb.

And this is repeated. And once again, when Scripture repeats a thing, it invites notice. Well, this is the verb shassa.

It's S-H-A-S-A. And it ends in a guttural. It ends in the evil ion.

It's sheen and then somic and then ion. And the ion is a guttural, so I can't make a guttural noise, but it's shassa. And it's got this kind of bleh at the end.

You've heard Semitic people talk this way. If you listen to these sort of glottal stops that they can do in Hebrew and in Arabic, well, I can't do it. I've tried.

They were teaching me Arabic. I just can't make that noise. You have to learn it as a child, I guess.

But it's shassa. That's the word. Well, it means to divide or to cleave in the cal stem.

If you remember a little bit about Hebrew stems, cal, that's just your declarative, your normal run of the mill. Things are usually in the cal. Q-A-L, the cal stem.

The niphal, N-I-P-H-A-L, that's the passive. That's if instead of you doing an action, somebody does it to you. If shassa was in the niphal, you would be getting divided or cleaved, cloven, cut in two.

The P-A-L, P-I-E-L, is the intensive stem in Hebrew. We don't really have an intensive. We have to use the word really or very or some other adverb to intensify our verbs.

I'm tired. I'm really tired. I'm sick.

I am so sick. We have to add a word. In Hebrew, you can just take that verb and put it in the P-A-L, and now it's intensive.

If you put shassa in the P-A-L, instead of dividing or cleaving, it means to rip, to rend, to tear

asunder in some kind of intensive, violent way. That's what we have here. It is the P-A-L of shassa.

This is a relatively rare word in the Old Testament. It is most often found in the Kal describing the hooves of clean animals. What is a clean animal? How is it described? Go over to Deuteronomy 14, verse 6. Any animal that divides the hoof and has the hoof split in two and chews the cud among the animals, that you may eat.

It's got a shassa hoof. In Hebrew, the animal divides its own hoof. It's a Kal Sem.

The animal divides its hoof. He puts down two toes, so to speak. You can eat that if you chew the cud.

The same thing in Leviticus, chapter 11, verse 26, concerning all the animals which divide the hoof but do not make a split or which do not chew the cud. They are unclean to you. Whoever touches them becomes unclean.

Shassa is the word that Hebrew people, that Israelites, always associate with discriminating between what is clean and what is unclean. That's what this verb connotes. It's the only place they found it in the law.

You can find it a few places later on in 1 Samuel 24, verse 8, but that's actually probably a corruption. It's in Leviticus and Deuteronomy for how you distinguish clean and unclean animals. Is their hoof shassad or not? Well, Samson, in the P.A.L., has divided this lion, has made him a sacrifice.

Oh, by the way, the other place where this word is used is in Leviticus 14, where the priest takes a hold of the bird by the wings and divides it. Shassa. It is always applied in the existing books when Judges was written.

It was always applied to sacrificial animals. Samson essentially divides this lion like a sacrifice. Who is the lion of the tribe of Judah? He will come 1,200 years hence, and the leadership in Israel is going to divide him because they are looking for something else.

He is the lion of the tribe of Judah and he gets divided. People thought he was going to come to judge. He came roaring and they said, make him the king.

Let him be the Davidic throne occupant and run out these Romans and take care of things. Instead, the wayward leadership in Israel slew him, and the lion is now dead. Well, what happens when Samson returns? What happened as a product of this death? Suddenly now there is something to eat.

Out of the eater comes forth something to eat, and out of the strong comes forth something sweet. I will leave you to meditate on that while we pause and eat something ourselves here in the break. When we come back, we will see how this plays into the riddle that Samson gives to

the Philistines at the feast.

Let's pause here and take our break.