

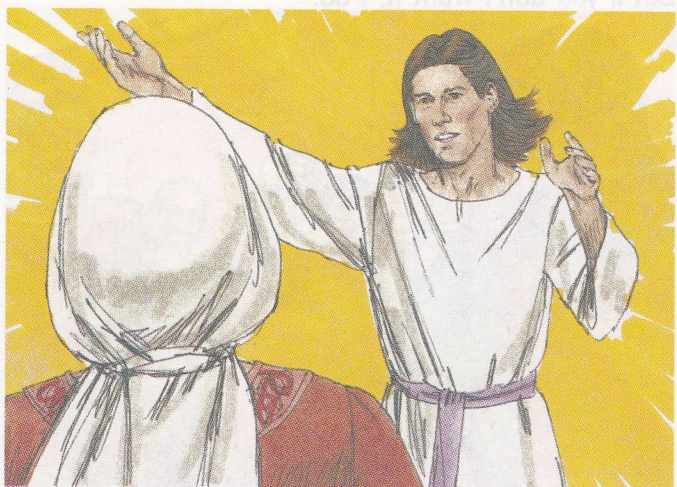
# Samson the Nazirite



**1** The Israelites sinned against the Lord; to punish them, God let the Philistines rule over them for forty years.



**2** At that time there was a certain woman who had no children. She was very surprised when an angel appeared to her one day and said, "You will soon become the mother of a baby boy."



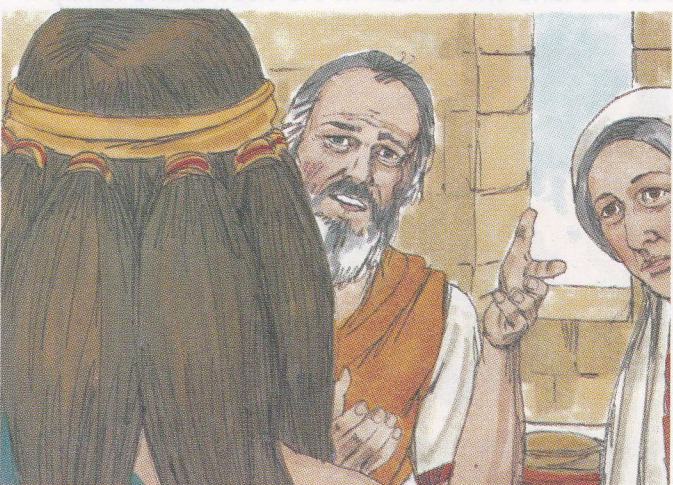
**3** The angel added: "Be sure not to drink any wine or eat any forbidden food. Don't ever cut the boy's hair, for he will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from the day he is born."



**4** In time the woman did, indeed, give birth to a son, whom she and her husband named Samson. The child grew, and the Lord blessed him.



**5** One day after he was grown, Samson made a trip to Timnah. When he got back home, he said to his parents, "I saw a Philistine girl over at Timnah. I want you to get her for my wife."



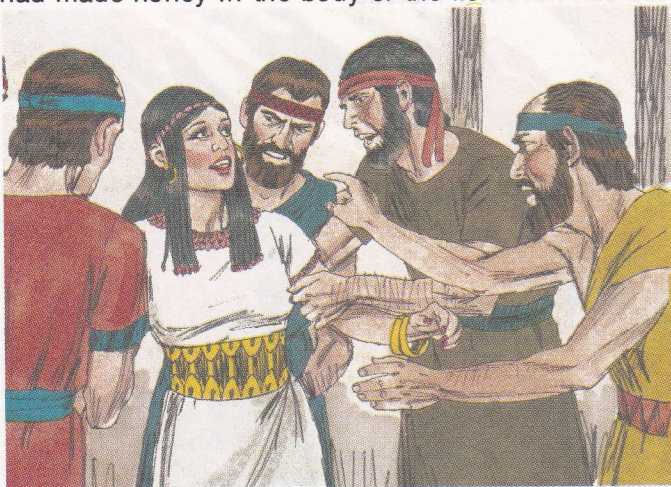
**6** His parents were, of course, upset, and said, "Why do you have to marry a Philistine? Can't you find a nice girl among our own people?" But Samson would not listen to them.



**7** On the way to Timnah Samson killed a lion, but he told no one about it. Returning a few days later for his wedding, Samson found that some bees had made honey in the body of the lion.



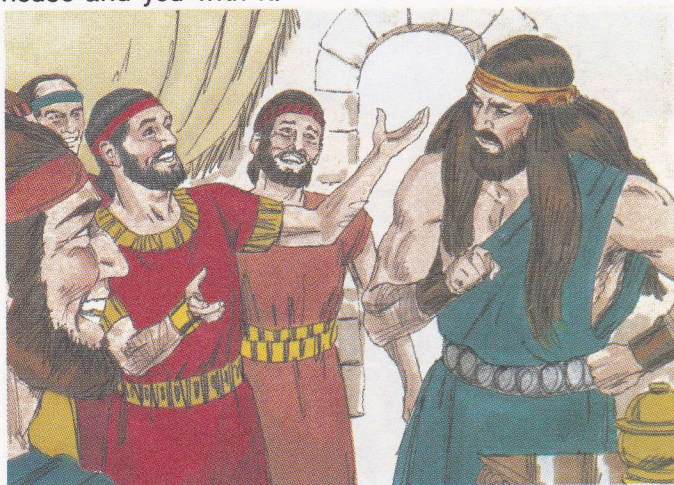
**8** Samson bet thirty men each a set of clothes that they could not explain this riddle before the feast's end: "Out of the eater came something to eat; out of the strong came something sweet."



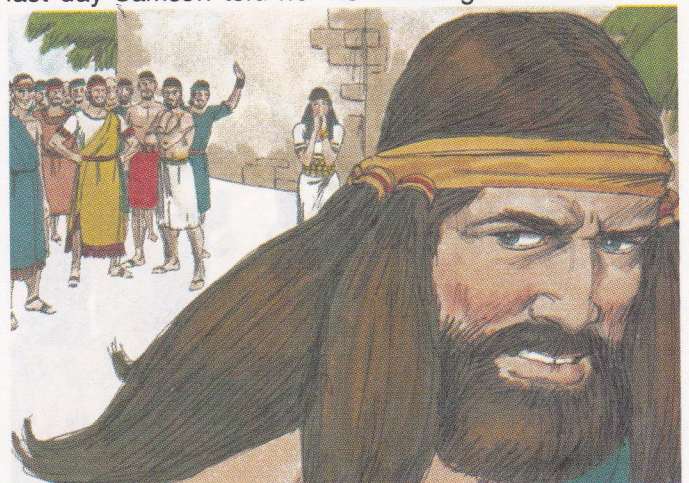
**9** On the fourth day of the wedding feast they said to Samson's wife: "Get your husband to tell what the riddle means. If you don't, we'll burn your father's house and you with it!"



**10** She went to Samson and said, "You don't love me! You told my friends a riddle and didn't tell me what it means!" She cried every day until on the last day Samson told her its meaning.



**11** Just before sundown, the young men came to him and said, "What could be sweeter than honey or stronger than a lion?" Samson was furious that his wife had told them the answer.



**12** Samson went to Ashkelon and he killed thirty men. He gave their clothes to the young men who had answered his riddle. Then he returned to his home in great anger — without his new bride.