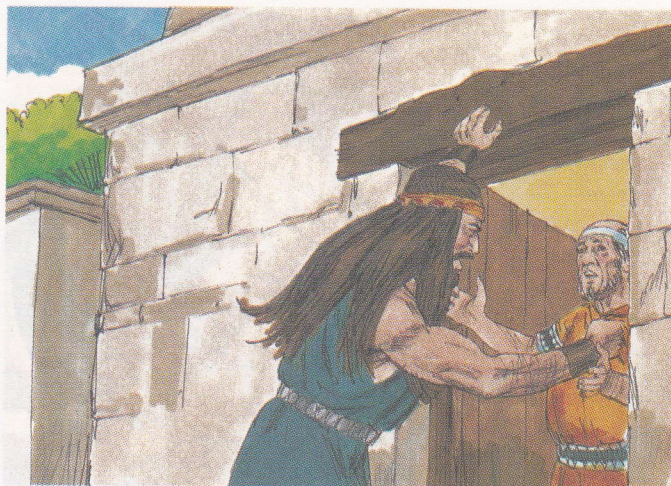


Samson and the Philistines



1 When the young Philistine men guessed the meaning of his riddle, Samson knew his bride had betrayed him. He returned in anger to his father's house without her.



2 Later Samson tried to visit his wife, but her father said, "I thought you hated her, so I gave her to your friend. Her younger sister is prettier anyway. You can have her instead."



3 But Samson said, "This time I've got a right to get even with the Philistines!" So he went out and caught 300 foxes, tied their tails together in pairs, and fastened torches in the knots.



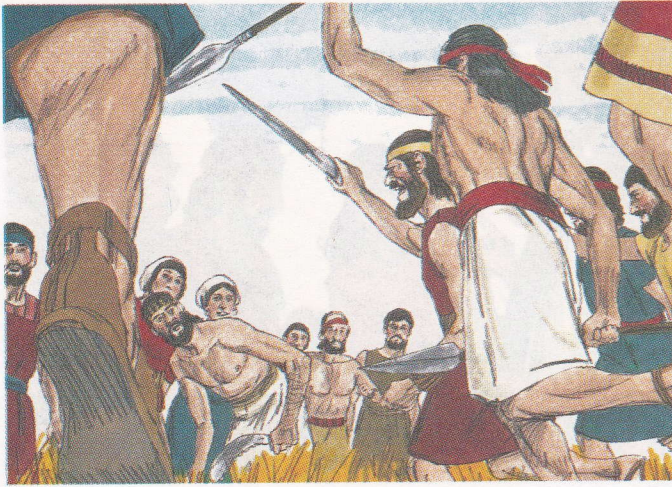
4 Then he set fire to the torches and let the foxes run through the fields of the Philistines. All the wheat still in the fields was burned up, and the olive orchards were ruined, too.



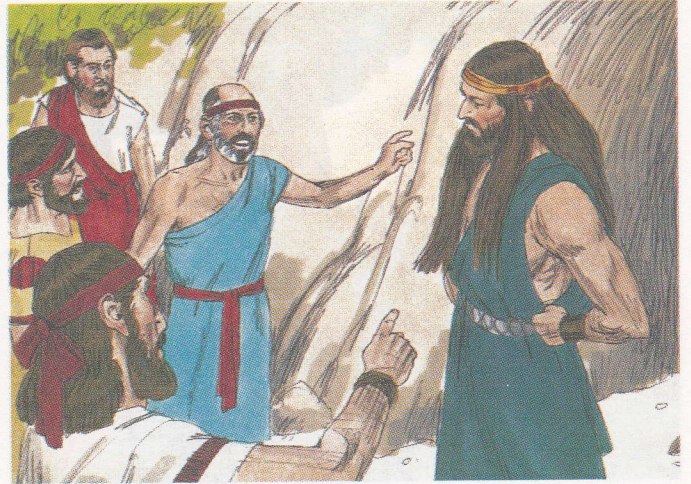
5 When the Philistines found out that Samson had done this because his father-in-law had given his wife to a friend, the Philistines went and burned Samson's wife and her father to death.



6 Samson was enraged. "I'm going to pay you back for what you've done!" he swore. He attacked the Philistines and killed many of them. Afterwards, he went and lived in a cave at Etam.



7 Soon the Philistines attacked the town of Lehi in Judah. The men of Judah asked, "Why have you attacked us?" They found out that the Philistines wanted to take Samson prisoner.



8 Some men of Judah went to the cave and said to Samson, "What have you done? Don't you know the Philistines are our rulers?" Samson replied, "I just did to them what they did to me."



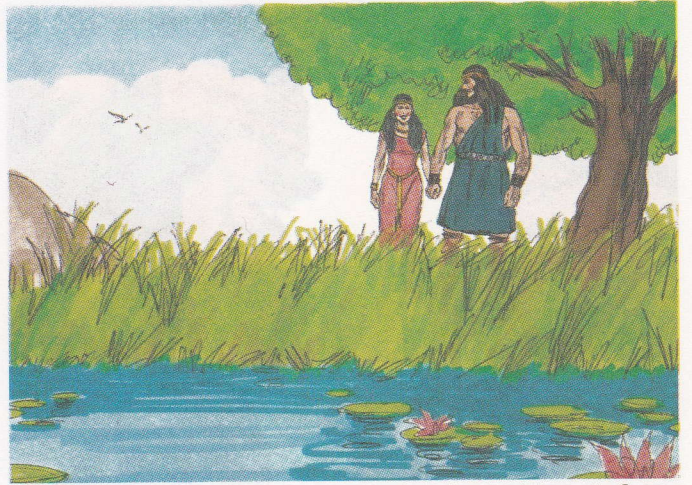
9 The men told Samson they were going to give him over to the Philistines. Samson made them promise they would not kill him and then let them tie him up with two new ropes.



10 At Lehi, the Philistines came running toward Samson. Suddenly the Spirit of the Lord made him strong, and he broke the ropes around his arms and hands as if they were burnt thread.



11 Looking about, he found the jawbone of a donkey that had recently died. Samson used the jawbone as a weapon and with it killed 1,000 Philistines.



12 During the twenty years that he led Israel, Samson had other troubles with the Philistines. The most famous of these happened after Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah.