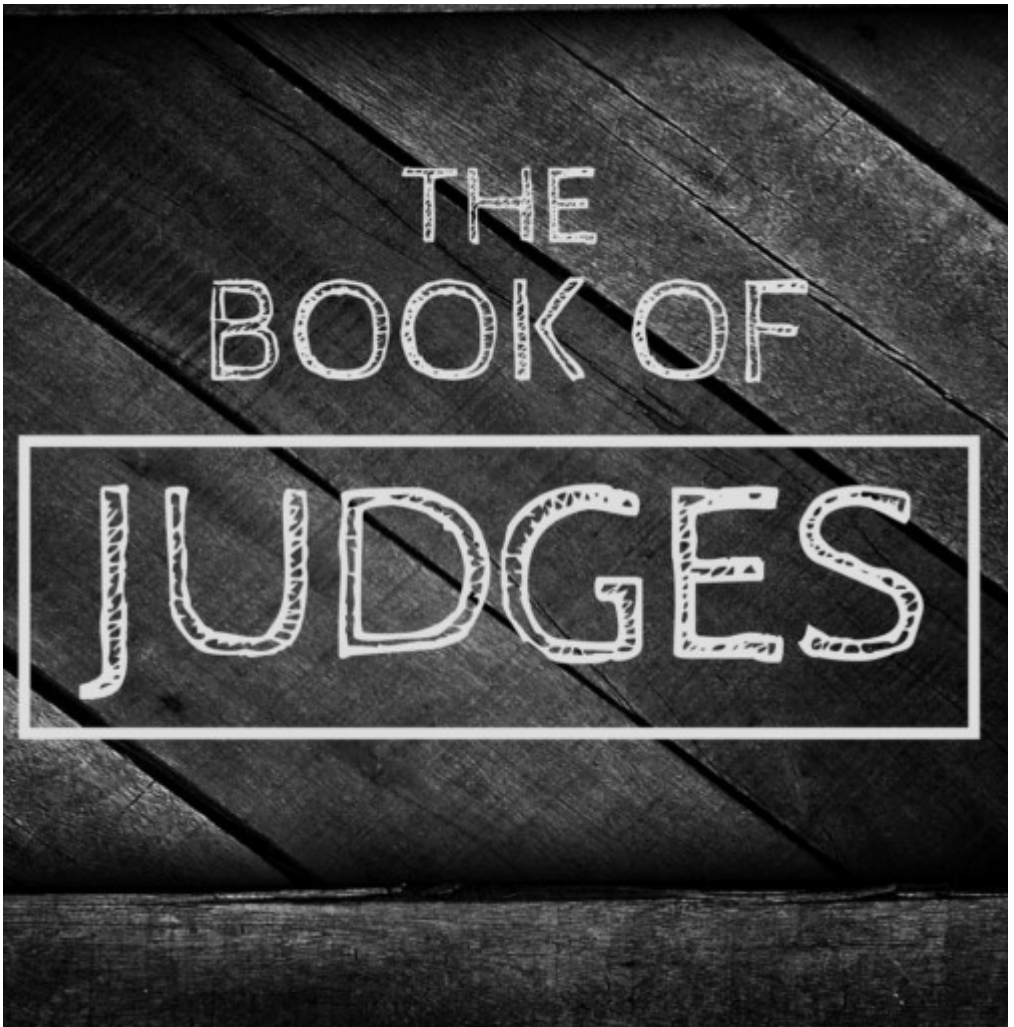


# Let's Worship God

16th-21st May 2022  
Judges



# JUDGES

## **Monday - Judges 16:21-25 - Gloating**

When the Philistines capture Samson, they blind him and take him to Gaza, where they bind him with bronze shackles and force him to work at hard labor in prison. When the kings of the five great Philistine cities ("the lords of the Philistines") gather at Gaza for the worship of the false god Dagon, they decide to gloat over Samson. Believing their god has given Samson to them, they bring him to the temple of Dagon that they might be entertained by the sight of this vanquished enemy. Samson has given the Philistines so much trouble that they rejoice at the sight of him blinded and humiliated, standing between the pillars of the temple of Dagon.

The Philistines credit Dagon - a god of the sea who is depicted with the head of a man and the body of a fish - with Samson's defeat. However, Samson lost his strength because the LORD was disciplining him, not because Dagon had overpowered him. The shaving of Samson's head was an outward sign of his faithlessness to his Nazirite vow, but as Numbers 6:9-12 teaches, a broken Nazirite vow can be renewed. In his current circumstance, Samson cannot make the appropriate sacrifices at the Tabernacle of the LORD, but, as we will see tomorrow, he has been humbled by God and repents of his waywardness. With his repentant attitude, we might consider the growth of Samson's hair to be an outward sign of his rededication to the LORD's service.

Sometimes our sins, and the discipline they bring from God, might make unbelievers mistakenly think our God is not real, or that He is weak and that their false gods are real and strong enough to overcome us. It is tragic when this occurs. God's people must repent of our sins and strive to live lives that honor Him. As we will see tomorrow, the LORD is about to show that it is He, not Dagon, who is God.

## **Questions**

1. What outward sign showed Samson's faithlessness?
2. What outward sign accompanies his repentance?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Pray that God will expose the falsehood of other so-called "gods."
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## **Memory Verse**

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Judges 17:6

**Praise: Psalm 97 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# JUDGES

## **Tuesday - Judges 16:26-30 - Samson's Death**

Samson has been brought to the temple of the false god Dagon that the Philistines might gloat over him. This temple was constructed with a flat roof supported by pillars surrounding a courtyard. As the sacrifices took place in the courtyard, the worshippers could watch. More important people, such as the lords of the Philistines, might watch from the shade under the roof, while others could gather on the roof and watch from above. In addition to the people below, about three-thousand have gathered on the roof, looking on Samson whom they think their god has defeated.

In his blindness, a young man holds Samson's hand in order to guide him. Samson prevails upon him to lead him to the pillars, where he might lean to rest. Humbled now by the disciplining hand of the LORD, he calls upon Him to strengthen him once more. Graciously, God gives Samson the superhuman strength he needs to push against the pillars and bring the roof of the temple of Dagon crashing down. Three thousand Philistines on the roof, plus the worshipers under it (including the lords of the Philistines) are killed. Thus, in his death, Samson killed more of Israel's enemies than he had in his entire life up to that point. The Philistines have brought Samson to the temple to brag about their victory over Israel, but it becomes Israel's victory as the LORD uses Samson to defeat His people's enemies. Not only does Samson get vengeance over the Philistines for having gouged out his eyes, but Israel receives a rest from the Philistines' oppression.

Again, we see the sovereignty of God. He uses the enemies of his people to discipline Samson, humbling him and bringing him to a point at which he calls upon the name of the LORD. By bringing Samson to the temple of Dagon at the end of his life, He arranges the circumstances so that this god is shown to be false while Israel's enemies are punished. We can be grateful that God orders all events for His glory and our good.

### **Questions**

1. How did God show that Dagon is a false god?
2. How did He use these circumstances for His glory & His people's good?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray that all things may bring glory to God.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Judges 17:6

**Praise: Psalm 98 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# JUDGES

## **Wednesday - Judges 16:31 - Samson's Life and Deeds**

When news of the end of Samson's life reaches his family, his brothers go to Gaza and retrieve his body, burying him alongside his father in a tomb between his hometown of Zorah and Eshtaol. In his twenty years of judgeship, Samson has proved to be a deeply flawed man. He desired women who were inappropriate for a godly man, marrying a Philistine woman, visiting a prostitute, and falling for the untrustworthy Delilah. He violated his Nazirite vow repeatedly, finally coming under God's disciplining hand when the last sign of that vow, his uncut hair, is shorn.

Nevertheless, Hebrews 11:32 lists him among those with faith. Even though Samson was prone to serious sins, he was a man who had faith in the LORD - a faith displayed in his calling on God in his last hour.

The LORD strengthened Samson to do things no other judge did. By the strength of the Holy Spirit, Samson struck down thirty Philistine men, smote the Philistines "hip and thigh," killed a thousand of them with the jawbone of a donkey and demolished the temple of Dagon. God used this deeply flawed man mightily.

Human failings are no impediment to the LORD. If He determines to use us as His instruments for bringing about His plan, our sins will not thwart or frustrate His design. While we ought to do all things in a manner that honors God in all obedience to His revealed will, we can take comfort in knowing that our sins and failings will not prevent the LORD from using us to bring about His good purposes.

## **Questions**

1. What are some things Samson did wrong?
2. Does this mean he did not have faith? How do we know?
3. How did God use Samson mightily? What does this teach us about whether God can use us?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Thank God that our sins and failings do not prevent Him from using us for His good purposes.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## **Memory Verse**

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Judges 17:6

**Praise: Psalm 99 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# JUDGES

## Thursday - Judges 17:1-5 - False Worship

Following the account of Samson's life, the rest of the Book of Judges recounts several events that demonstrate the depravity of Israel during this period. First comes the history of a man from the tribe of Ephraim named Micah. Micah has stolen 1,100 pieces of silver, a very large sum, from his own mother. Perhaps stung by his conscience or perhaps fearing the curse his mother has uttered will fall upon him, he confesses the theft and restores the money to her. She neither seems surprised nor hurt that her son has done this wicked thing. She blesses him for returning the money and responds by dedicating it to the LORD. Disturbingly, she uses two-hundred pieces of this silver to make an idol.

While this is supposedly for the worship of the true God, it violates His Law. Deuteronomy 12:32 explicitly tells us we are never to add to or take away from God's commandments concerning His worship, and the Second Commandment, found in Exodus 20:4-6 and Deuteronomy 5:8-10, expressly forbids the use of images or representations of God in His worship. Moreover, the only shrine to the LORD in this period was the Tabernacle which housed the Ark of the Covenant, and the descendants of Aaron, alone, were to be God's priests. That Micah builds a shrine, ostensibly for the worship of the LORD, and that he ordains his own son to be his priest, shows that, at best, he is Biblically ignorant, if not outright defiant of God's Law.

Deuteronomy 12:28-32 teaches what we call the Regulative Principle for Worship which, simply put, states "What God has not commanded as an act of worship, He has forbidden." If God has not told us to do something as an act of worship under the Covenant by which He relates to us in our time (for us, this is the New Covenant in Christ), we must not do it. It is not for us to add elements of our own to the worship of God.

## Questions

1. How do we know that what Micah and his mother did was false worship?
2. What is the Regulative Principle for Worship?

## Prayer Points

1. Pray that our worship would be pure and genuine.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## Memory Verse

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Judges 17:6

**Praise: Psalm 100 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# JUDGES

## Friday - Judges 17:6 - Right in His Own Eyes

Today, we read of the general problem behind the events in these last chapters of Judges. In the early chapters of the book, we saw that a pattern was set whereby a generation would turn from the Lord, He would discipline them by letting them fall into the hand of their enemies, they would call on Him for deliverance, He would raise up a judge who saved them, they would worship the Lord all the days of the judge, but would then turn from God again. Judges 2:19 tells us that each time this happened, the new generation was more corrupt than the last. Judges has shown us this downward spiral. Now, the latter generations have reached a very low point.

First, we are told "In those days there was no king in Israel." We have noted before that God promised one day to choose a king for Israel (Deuteronomy 17:15). In Judges 8:23, Gideon rightly pointed out that the LORD was the true King in Israel. While the time has not yet come in which God will choose a human king for Israel, He is their King. That the Scripture says "in those days there was no king in Israel," tells us that no one was acknowledging the LORD's kingship. Consequently, "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

Sadly, most (probably all) of us live in cultures that could be described in much the same way. The Kingship of God is not acknowledged and everyone does what is right in his own eyes. In situations in which people do whatever seems right to them, with no regard for a standard outside themselves, however much they might claim "I am not hurting anyone," they have no higher standard by which to judge whether or not their actions hurt anyone. It is for the Church lovingly to speak the truth that God is King, and everyone is accountable to Him. We must not do what is right in our own eyes. We must do what God declares is right.

## Questions

1. Who was Israel's King in the time of the judges?
2. Why then does Judges 17:6 say there was no king in Israel?
3. Why should we not do what is right in our own eyes?

## Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would obey God and not do what is right in our own eyes.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## Memory Verse

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Judges 17:6

**Praise: Psalm 101 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# JUDGES

## **Saturday - Judges 17:7-13 - From Bad to Worse**

Thursday we saw that Micah had made idols and built a shrine. Despite having no authority from God to do so, he ordained one of his own sons to be his priest. Today, we read that a Levite from Bethlehem comes to Micah's house and Micah ordains him to be his priest. We might think this is a step up - after all, the priests were descendants of Aaron from the tribe of Levi, and the rest of the Levites were supposed to be assistants to the priests and teachers of God's Law in Israel. Micah at least has a Levite, if not a son of Aaron, leading his family in worship.

However, this demonstrates a worse state of affairs than we have been told about so far. First, the Levite feels the need to leave Bethlehem, suggesting he was not being supported by the tithes of the people. Second, even if Micah does not know any better than to make his own shrine and idols, this Levite should. Third, the Levite is content to stay with Micah for the promise of an easy living. Thus, the truth is compromised for the sake of a salary.

In an era like our own, when people are doing what is right in their own eyes, there are many professing Christians who are willing to pay a pastor who will tell them only what they want to hear, rather than proclaim the whole counsel of God's Word to them. Christians in many other disciplines are often pressured to compromise God's truth for the sake of a job or a promotion. We must never forsake God's truth for the sake of career or comfort.

## **Questions**

1. Why might some think Micah's choice of a Levite is a step in the right direction?
2. What kind of problems do we see in this situation?
3. How might we be tempted to compromise God's truth?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters

## **Memory Verse**

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Judges 17:6

**Praise: Psalm 102 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that  
Ezra read from  
the book of the Law  
day after day  
and that  
the people of God  
were filled with joy!**

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