

The Story of The Bible Week 5 – Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel 1-17

Questions:

1. Have you ever read the Bible just for the narrative? Why or why not?
2. Listening to the narrative we have gotten through so far, has it helped your understanding of the Bible yet?
3. Do you see Jesus (or things pointing to Jesus) in the story we covered this week?
4. Saul and David were both anointed of the Lord; the difference was that Saul was after his own fame, whereas David was “after God’s own heart.” What do you think about this distinction in your own life?
5. Israel struggled with fighting its giants for years until David ultimately defeated them. What Giants are you facing in your life, and how can you be more like David to allow God to defeat the giants in your life?

Recap

- God’s name is Yahweh, which means HE IS.
- Yahweh created everything.
- Man lived in the Garden of Eden, the place where God dwelled with man face-to-face.
- Mankind and the angels rebelled a total of 3 times each.
 1. Garden
 2. Nephilim/Flood
 3. Tower of Babel/Disinheritance of the Nations.
- God made a nation for Himself through a man named Abraham.
- Abraham’s descendants became numerous and were called the Israelites.
- The Israelites were enslaved in Egypt until God raised up Moses.
- Moses told Pharaoh to let Yahweh’s people go.
- Pharaoh refused to let them go because he didn’t believe Yahweh had the power to defeat him.
- Yahweh warred against Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt, defeating them easily.
- God’s people left Egypt for the promised land.
- When they got to the promised land they refused to enter the land because of the Nephilim.
- Nephilim are an unclean mixture - part human, part angel. As such they are giants, very tall and very strong.
- After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness and fighting 2 Nephilim kings Israel entered the promised land.
- In the promised land the Israelites warred against the Giants whipping them out except for a few places where the remnant of the giants remained.

Israel Occupies the Land

After seven long years, Israel had conquered the land, well, most of it. Israel began settling in their allotted land in Canaan, now called Israel. The tribe of Dan had the most trouble with their occupation. The Philistines lived in the land Dan was supposed to take. It would be in Philistia that the last of the Nephilim would live until the time of King David. Efforts to take the land failed for the tribe of Dan.

Instead, the tribe of Dan journeyed from location to location before finally settling in the land of Bashan in the far north of Israel. Things would begin to become normalized for Israel. Life began to happen. Kids were born, farms were planted, and cities were built and occupied. Joshua urged the children of Israel to follow Yahweh always.

Unfortunately, his warning was not obeyed. After Joshua died, Israel still wished to defeat the remaining Canaanites in the land, so they asked Yahweh. Yahweh fought with Israel for some time, and Israel defeated many of its enemies. However, after some time, Israel gave up their conquest. Instead, they made peace with the residents of the land and even started worshiping their gods. Yahweh Himself would appear before some of the leaders of Israel:

Judges 2:1-4 (ESV)

¹ Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you,' ² and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done?" ³ So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you." ⁴ As soon as the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept.

The Time of the Judges

After Joshua died, a generation grew up who did not know Joshua and had not been in Egypt when the Lord delivered them.

Judges 2:11-13 (ESV)

¹¹ And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. ¹² And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger. ¹³ They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth.

Baal and Ashtaroth were gods from Canaan and the surrounding regions. Baal, in fact, was whom the Canaanites believe created the earth and conquered Chaos in seven days. Of course we know it was Yahweh and it only took Him six days, He rested on the seventh. Baal worship was extremely perverse, including sexual acts and the sacrifice of children. Baal and Zeus are counterparts in their various religions. They are the same god but in different regions with slightly different beliefs.

Ashtaroth (also known as Astarte) was a goddess married to the Canaanite god named El (which means god in Semitic languages). The Israelites began to mix pagan worship of these gods with Yahweh worship. We even have evidence that some false teachers may have taught that Astarte was Yahweh's wife; of course, this is untrue.

While we can look at the Israelites and rightfully ask, "What were they thinking?" we cannot be judgmental. We are subject to this kind of perversion; we may not outright worship other gods, but when we create Yahweh into what we want Him to look like, we do the same thing. It is not our right to decide how we worship Him or what we think it should look like. We don't get to argue about what He says is right or wrong. HE IS who HE IS; it is the meaning of His Name. Our responsibility is to search scripture and adjust ourselves to Him, not the other way around.

Ups and Down

Israel continued life in the promised land for some time. Because of their disobedience and pursuit of other gods, Yahweh allowed the surrounding nations to be a thorn in Israel's side. Life in Israel will be full of ups and downs for the next few hundred years. These ups and downs would come as the people of Israel served Yahweh or not. God would often raise judges to lead the Israelites back to God and deliver Israelites from the oppression of the surrounding nations.

There are twelve judges listed in the Book of Judges. They are Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and Samson. Many of these judges were righteous, like the prophetess Deborah. However, the Bible also records how these judges failed in various forms. The Lord gave Sampson supernatural strength, yet he is well known for his partying and lust. It is not until the end of his life that He accomplished what the Lord had for him. Gideon tested God's word on multiple occasions, and in the end, some of the things Gideon did led to future idolatry in Israel.

There are two clear lessons in the book of Judges. First, God loves His people and wants what is best for them. Second, if we are disobedient, He will allow things to come into our lives to

lead us back to Him. He has every right to pull away His protection from us in our disobedience. That doesn't mean they were no longer His people, but His blessing on His people was not guaranteed; in fact, He explicitly warned His people what would happen if they disobeyed Him, see [Deuteronomy 30:11-20](#) (ESV).

It is the same today. We do not earn our salvation; it is freely given and freely received. However, the blessing of the Lord and the fruit of our salvation rely on whether we obey Him. Jesus isn't looking for us to be perfect overnight but expects us to come to Him so we can be changed into His image ([2 Corinthians 3:16-18](#)).

A King is Coming

After the time of the judges, Israel would ask for a king to rule them. God would raise a man named Samuel, who would be the last judge and the first prophet of Israel, and anoint someone as King of Israel. Samuel would serve as a transition figure for Israel, a change in seasons. At the end of the judges' time, things in Israel were at an all-time low. The priests had become selfish and corrupt, taking for themselves all they wanted. We learn that the priests would let the lampstand in the Tabernacle go out every night. Things are so bad that the high priest thinks Samuel's mother is drunk when she comes to pray at the Tabernacle. He doesn't recognize what someone pouring out their heart to God looks like.

This woman's name was Hannah (which means grace). She, like Sarah, was barren, unable to have children. She loved Yahweh and kept His commands. While praying, she asked Yahweh for a child and told Him that if she did conceive, she would give the child to the Lord. Seeing Hannah's faith, God opened her womb. Hannah would, in time, come to have five children. She kept her promise; the firstborn was a male whom she named Samuel. Samuel means (The Name of God). She told people she named Him Samuel because: "I have asked for him from [Yahweh](#)." ([1 Samuel 1:20](#)). Hannah saw how people were not calling on Yahweh for their source, provision, or need for Him. Instead, they were calling on the names of other gods. Hannah was a bold and zealous woman. Through her son's name, Hannah told people they needed to return to The Name of the only true God, Yahweh.

After Samuel was old enough, he became a priest in the Tabernacle. Samuel was different. Samuel ministered to Yahweh and spent time in His temple. One night, Yahweh appeared to Samuel; it was the first time He had appeared to an Israelite in a long time. Yahweh told Samuel of the judgment coming upon Israel and the High Priest's family. God had had enough of their rebellion; He wanted His people back and chose Samuel to lead the way. After some time, the Israelites were at war with the Philistines. Fresh off losing a battle, they had an idea.

It was common for the nations surrounding them to carry their idols into battle with them. Pagan worship consisted of creating idols and performing rituals to try and get their god to help them. The Israelites must have thought to themselves, “We have something like that.” Because 3 ...the elders of Israel said, “Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies.”” 1 Samuel 4:3 (ESV). So that’s what they did: they took the Ark of the Covenant out of the Tabernacle and brought it into battle. But it didn’t go how they thought it would go; instead of Yahweh fighting for them, Yahweh gave them over to their enemies. They lost their battle and lost the Ark in the process. Upon hearing this news, the high priest of Israel fell over in his chair and died.

Samuel is raised up

When Samuel was of age, he would speak to all of Israel:

1 Samuel 7:3–4 (LEB)

³ And Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, “If with all your heart you *are* turning to Yahweh, remove the foreign gods and Ashtoreths from your midst. Commit your hearts to Yahweh and serve him alone. Then he will deliver you from the hand of *the* Philistines.” ⁴ So the Israelites removed the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and they served Yahweh alone.

Through Samuel’s leadership, Israel returned to Yahweh. Israel began to win their battles and prosper in the land. Samuel led the people to do what was right in the eyes of the Lord. However, Samuel was just a man. As Samuel got older, the people began to ask him who would replace him. Israel asked for a king. After all, their law had rules for what a king should be like when they ask for one: Deuteronomy 17:14–15 “14 “When you come to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ 15 you may indeed set a king over you whom the Lord your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.”

But Samuel perceived what was in their heart. Any king who would be King over Israel would need to be a spiritual leader like Moses. Yet they didn’t want a spiritual leader; they wanted a military leader. Samuel warned them that they were motivated by a wrong desire “19 But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, “No! But there shall be a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our King may judge us and **go out before us and fight our battles.**”” 1 Samuel 8:19–20.

Yahweh agreed, and Samuel anointed a man named Saul. To start, Saul was a great king. He followed the commands of Yahweh, but before long, Saul began to care more about how he

looked in the eyes of the people than the eyes of Yahweh. One day before a battle, Saul would call for Samuel to make a sacrifice to Yahweh. Samuel said he would be on his way, but he was delayed. Rather than wait, Saul offered the sacrifice himself. When Samuel arrived

When Samuel arrived:

1 Samuel 13:11–15 (LEB)

¹¹ But Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul said, “Because I saw that the army was scattering from me and you did not come at the appointed time and *that the* Philistines had gathered at Micmash, ¹² therefore I said, ‘Now *the* Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not yet implored the face of Yahweh.’ So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering.” ¹³ Then Samuel said to Saul, “You have behaved foolishly! You have not kept the command of Yahweh your God which he commanded you. For then, Yahweh would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. ¹⁴ But now, your kingdom will not endure.

Yahweh has sought for himself a man according to his own heart, and Yahweh has appointed him as leader over his people, because you have not kept what Yahweh commanded you.” ¹⁵ Then Samuel got up and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul mustered the people who were found with him, about six hundred men.

If Saul had obeyed the voice of the Lord, his line would never have ended, but the Lord was looking for someone after His heart, not someone looking to exalt themselves.

David is born.

The Bible tells us of an Israelite family from the tribe of Judah in a book called Ruth. In the days of the judges, a named Elimelech (which means God is my King) left a city called Bethlehem to live in Moab. He brought his wife Naomi (which means lovely) and his two sons. The two sons took Moabite women to be their wives. Their names were Orpah and Ruth. However, both sons passed away before they had any offspring. Elimelech also passed away. The three women were all alone. Naomi decided it was best she returned to Bethlehem. Initially, both daughters wanted to return with her, but eventually, Orpah returned home. Ruth, however, was different; she pleaded with Naomi:

Ruth 1:16–17 (LEB)

16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you! For where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. So may Yahweh do to me, and even more, unless death separates you and me!”

Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem, where her relatives greeted her. Naomi (which means lovely) changed her name to Mara, which means bitter. Naomi and Ruth had to live off the

generosity of others; they found favor with a relative named Boaz (which means strength). Ruth and Boaz fell in love and got married. Ruth and Boaz would be the great-grandparents of a boy named David.

David is anointed as the next king of Israel.

King Saul ended up not being the King that the Lord desired for His people. He wanted a King who was “a man after His own heart.” So Yahweh told Samuel to go to Jesse, a Bethlehemite, to anoint the next King. When Samuel arrived, Jesse introduced Samuel to all of his sons. Samuel initially judged them by mere appearance:

1 Samuel 16:7 (LEB)

⁷ But Yahweh said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For *God does* not see what man sees, for a man looks on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks on the heart.”

After Jesse had shown his sons (except for David), Samuel asked if there were any sons left. David was Jesse’s youngest son and was keeping the sheep. Samuel told Jesse to bring David before him. When Samuel saw David, the Lord told Samuel to anoint the boy. The Spirit of Yahweh anointed (empowered/set apart) David that day.

All of this happened without King Saul knowing; if he had known, Samuel feared Saul would kill him and likely would have killed David as well.

Anointed - Messiah

The word anoint in Hebrew is “mashach,” which we usually translate as “Messiah.” In Greek, this word is “Christ.” What is interesting is every Israelite King is called “mashach,” this is why Jesus is not only King but King of kings. He is the ultimate “mashach”, the final and forever “mashach.”

David the Anointed Musician.

After revealing David’s anointing by the Spirit of Yahweh, the Bible gives us two examples of how the Lord had anointed David as a worshipper and a warrior.

After Saul’s rebellion, Yahweh departed from King Saul, and a “harmful spirit” was sent to torment him. Because of this Saul asked for a skillful musician to play the lyre (a lyre is like a

handheld harp or primitive guitar). Saul's servants knew David was a skillful musician so they called for him.

1 Samuel 16:23 (ESV)

²³ And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him.

Worship can move the spiritual "realm." It cannot be taken lightly. The reason worship is so powerful, especially when led by anointed musicians and singers, is it causes us to turn our complete attention to Him. We become so overwhelmed with Him that we lose our self-focus. As we set our eyes upon Him, things begin to change as He fights our battles for us.

David the Giant Slayer.

Not only was David an anointed musician, but he was a mighty warrior. The Philistines, one of only a few remaining places with Nephilim/Giants left, came against the people of Israel. Their leading soldier is a giant named Goliath. Goliath wore bronze armor weighing 150 pounds, compared to Roman armor weighing around 25 pounds on the heavy side. Even in Medieval times, when a knight would be covered head to toe in armor, the weight would be around 55 pounds. The shaft of his spear was much larger than a regular spear shaft, and the head of the spear weighed over 16 pounds. The average weight of ancient spearheads used by ancient armies maxes out at 5.5 pounds. Not only was Goliath tall, but he was incredibly strong. Day after day, He would taunt the Israelites. Saul and all of Israel were too afraid of this giant to go fight him. *(Remember that Israel wanted a king to fight their battles for them, now their king was cowering in fear and unwilling to fight their battles, it's not going great for them.)*

David, likely a teenager (16-19), was going back and forth from shepherding his father's sheep and the front lines where his three oldest brothers were to bring them food at that time. One day, when David left to see his brothers, he heard Goliath taunting the Israelite army. David was offended that someone would "...defy the armies of the living God..." (1 Samuel 17:26). After hearing this, David was brought to Saul, where Saul told David no one could defeat this giant. Confident in the Lord, David said to Saul:

1 Samuel 17:34-37 (LEB)

³⁴ And David said to Saul, "Your servant has been a shepherd of the flock for his father. If the lion or the bear would come and carry off a sheep from the group, ³⁵ I would go out after it and strike it down and rescue *the sheep* from its mouth. If it rose against me, I would grab *it* by its beard and strike it down and kill it. ³⁶ Your servant has struck down both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he defied the battle lines of

the living God.”³⁷ And David said, “Yahweh, who rescued me from the hand of the lion and from the hand of the bear, will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine!” Then Saul said to David, “Go and may Yahweh be with you!”

David went to the front lines to face the giant, bringing his staff, a sling, and five stones.

1 Samuel 17:42–50 (LEB)

⁴² When the Philistine looked and saw David, he despised him, for he was *only* a boy and ruddy with a handsome appearance. ⁴³ So the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you *are* coming to me with sticks?” Then the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ The Philistine said to David, “Come to me so that I can give your flesh to the birds of heaven and to the wild animals of the field!” ⁴⁵ Then David said to the Philistine, “You *are* coming to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I am coming to you in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the battle lines of Israel, whom you have defied! ⁴⁶ This day Yahweh will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head! Then I will give *the* corpses of the army of *the* Philistines this day to the birds of heaven and to the animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God *who is* for Israel. ⁴⁷ And all of this assembly will know that Yahweh does not rescue with sword or with spear, for the battle *belongs* to Yahweh, and he will give you into our hands!” ⁴⁸ When the Philistine got up and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly to the battle line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ Then David put his hand into the bag and took a stone from it and slung *it*. He struck the Philistine on his forehead, and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground. ⁵⁰ So David prevailed over the Philistine with the sling and with the stone, and he struck down the Philistine and killed him, but there was no sword in David’s hand.

David slew the giant and became a hero to Israel.

The narrative is laid out to give us a picture of Saul vs. David. Saul was anointed King of Israel and started well, but Saul quickly became self-centered. In his selfishness, he began making compromises. These compromises ultimately led to him being forsaken by God and the call upon his life revoked. David was a man after God’s own heart. David also made compromises, but ultimately, God made a covenant with him that his offspring would rule forever. The difference is that David dealt with his sin; he repented and sought the Lord. David was a man after God’s own heart. When Saul sinned, he didn’t desire to change; he desired to continue looking good in the eyes of the people. We all have the same choice. We as believers are all called, and we are all anointed; the question is, “Are truly we a man or woman after God’s own heart?”