

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankston.rpca.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries *Judges* by Matthew Henry, Simon Robinson, and Warren Wiersbe.

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

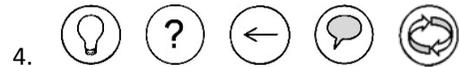
Worshipping Together

Reading Judges 17:1-6 Everyone did what was right in his own eyes

Notes As we near the end of the book of Judges we are given two accounts of Israel’s decay during this time. The chronology of Judges is difficult but it appears that the events in 17-18 take place early in the time period of the whole book. Whenever it took place, it was an ugly period of everyone doing what was right in their own eyes (whatever they wanted to do).

Micah, from Ephraim, stole his mother’s silver, and admitted it only when she pronounced a curse on the thief. His mother reneges on her curse and blesses her somewhat repentant son, then declares the silver is dedicated to the Lord so has an idol made. Micah adds the idol to his shrine collection and makes one of his sons his “priest.” *Have you ever seen a family more spiritually and morally confused than this one? They managed to break almost all the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1–17) and yet not feel the least bit guilty before the Lord! In fact, they thought they were serving the Lord by the bizarre things they did!* (Wiersbe) Is it any wonder that this section concludes that everyone did as he (she) sees fit? It’s good we’re not like that! Or, maybe we are.

- Questions**
1. What is the end result of doing what is right in our own eyes?
 2. What is the alternative to doing whatever we see as right?
 3. Which commandments did Micah and his mother break?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 57a²
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to seeking and doing what is right in God’s eyes, by God’s help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

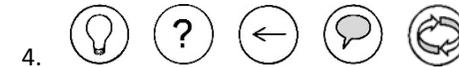
Worshipping Together

Reading Judges 18:27-31 So, they lived idolatrously ever after!

Notes The Danites had their false gods and their false priest and 600 angry armed men. The city of Laish didn’t stand a chance! After destroying the city and the people, *they rebuilt it and proudly called it Dan, after the name of the founder of their tribe. Unfortunately, what Jacob prophesied about the tribe of Dan came true (Gen. 49:17). Someone has said that there are only three philosophies of life in today’s world: (1) “What’s mine is mine, I’ll keep it”; (2) “What’s yours is mine, I’ll take it”; and (3) “What’s mine is yours, I’ll share it.” The Danites followed the second philosophy, and so do too many other grasping people.* (Wiersbe)

This new tribal home would become the northernmost point of the nation of Israel. “From Dan to Beersheba (the southernmost point)” would become the measurement of the land of Israel (Judges 20:1, 1 Sam. 3:20, 2 Sam. 3:10, 17:11, 24:2, 15, 1 Kings 4:25, 1 Chron 21:2, 2 Chron 30:5) Yet it would also be a measurement of Israel’s reliance on false gods rather than the true and living God. The Danites set up Jonathan and his idols stolen from Micah. King Jeroboam would later set up a gold calf in Dan (1 Kings 12:28-30). Yet be not deceived, God will not be mocked. (Gal. 6:7). “Those who say, ‘As your god lives, O Dan!’ and, ‘As the way of Beersheba lives!’ they shall fall and never rise again.” (Amos 8:14)

- Questions**
1. Why did the Danites take the city of Laish?
 2. What would become the pattern of religion in Dan?
 3. How will God deal with unrepentant idolaters?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 57a
1. Pray that you and your family will turn from idolatry, with God’s help
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

Worshipping Together

Reading Judges 18:22-26 Now, what do I have?

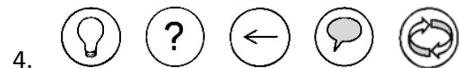
Notes Jonathan’s happy, the Danites are happy. But Micah’s not! *By the time the Danites had traveled some distance away, Micah discovered that his shrine was out of business, having neither gods nor priest; so he called his neighbors together, and they pursued the invaders. After all, a man must protect his gods!* (Wiersbe)

Micah and his neighbours soon catch up to the war party which was slowed by children and livestock. “Hey!” yells Micah, bringing the army to a halt. So they turn back and face him and his small band of men. “What is your problem?” they ask.

“Well, you took my gods and my priest!” Micah protests. “Now, what do I have?” *Micah’s sad question “What else do I have?” (v. 24, NIV) reveals the folly and the tragedy of religion without the true and living God. Idolaters worship gods they can carry, but Christians worship a God who carries them (Isa. 46:1–7).* (Wiersbe)

Though Micah thinks he has the right, the Danites have the might. “Is it worth your life?” they ask? “You want a fight? We’ll give it to you.” As much as he wants his idols and his priest back, Micah realises he’s not strong enough, so he turns tail for home.

- Questions**
1. Why does Micah gather his neighbours and go after the Danites?
 2. What is the result?
 3. What do we have left if we lose our false gods?



Praise Psalm 57a

- Pray**
1. Confess, with your family, your heart tendency to false gods. Seek help from the true and living God to serve Him only.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Worshipping Together

Reading Judges 17:7-13 Getting God’s favour?

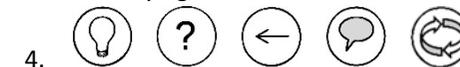
Notes Micah’s son’s priesthood is short lived. His dad gets a better offer. Along comes a wandering Levite. This Levite, Jonathan (18:30), was not in one of the Levitical cities, but in Bethlehem. Had he begun wandering because Israel was failing to provide for the priests and Levites as God had commanded? Or was he also simply doing what was right in his own eyes? Either way, God’s ways were neglected.

Hearing of Micah’s shrine, *he goes to offer his service, with, “Have you any work for a Levite? For I am out of business, and go to sojourn where I may find a place;” all he aimed at was to get bread, not to do good.* (Henry)

Micah made him an offer: he could live in his house ‘as [his] father and priest’ in return for board, lodging and money. This was highly irregular: the Levites were a tribe set apart by God to serve him as priests; they were allotted cities to live in and were to be supported by the rest of the population. However, as far as the young priest was concerned it was an offer he could not refuse, even though the shrine was full of idols. (Robinson)

Both Micah and the Levite are happy. Micah even lives the lie that by buying a more legitimate priest than just setting up his own son as one God will now bless him. Do we too at times pretend we are doing the right thing when actually disobeying God?

- Questions**
1. Where should Jonathan the Levite have been?
 2. Why did Micah think the Lord would now bless him?
 3. How might we pretend to do the right thing when actually disobeying God??



Praise Psalm 57a

- Pray**
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to seeking God’s blessing by obedience to Him, with His help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

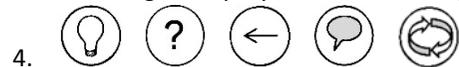
Reading Judges 18:1-6 No king in those days

Notes Again we are reminded that in those days there was no king in Israel. This seems not to be merely a chronological reference, but shorthand for “since there was no king, everyone lived as if he was his own king and did whatever he wanted.” (17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25) In our bent toward independence how easy it is to fool ourselves. Like Israel, we know that the Lord reigns (Psalm 99:1) but if we think we can get away with it, we will often serve ourselves instead.

Now we find another of Israel’s tribes, the Danites, straying from God’s ways to whatever they see fit. They *were not able to defeat and dispossess the enemy (Jdg. 1:34), thus they decided to go north and relocate. Most of the other tribes were able to conquer the enemy, dispossessed them, and claim their land, but the Danites coveted somebody else’s land instead and took it in a violent manner. (Wiersbe)*

On their hunt for a new tribal land, they stop by Micah’s. Hearing the accent of the young priest, they realise he’s not from around there and ask for his story. When finding out he is a hired priest, they ask if God will bless their journey. Jonathan’s happy to give them good news, “Go with God’s peace and God’s presence!” I mean, why quibble with details like obedience?

- Questions**
1. When does God rule over Israel? over us?
 2. Why did the Danites seek another land?
 3. How might we pray for God’s blessing while disobeying Him?



Praise Psalm 57a

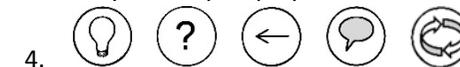
- Pray**
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to submit to Christ as King, with God’s help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Judges 18:7-21 Taking what God gives?

Notes Having received a false assurance of God’s blessing, the Danite spies head up to Laish, a land outside of the boundaries God had given to His people in Canaan (Joshua 19:47). *The inhabitants of Laish were peaceful and secure, not cruel and war-like as the Canaanites were. But the Danites assumed that God wanted them to launch an attack on them. They could not fight the tough enemies they faced in the south—such as the Philistines and Ammonites—but they had no problem massacring the peaceful people of Laish. The Levite had said that their journey had the Lord’s approval, the land had everything they wanted and the people were easy to defeat. This led them to assume that it was the Lord’s will, but the idolatry that followed (see vv. 29–31) proves that they had no intention to serve God. (Robinson)*

Unlike the men who spied out the land of Canaan before the conquest (Numbers 13), these spies came back with a glowing report. After convincing themselves, they arm 600 men for war and head up to destroy this peaceful people. But first, they stop by Micah’s house for another visit with their favourite priest, and make him a better offer. “Come, be priest for us – a whole tribe of Israel. That’s way better than “priesting” for just one man!” So, they take him, and Micah’s shrine of gods. Jonathan’s happy, the Danites are happy. God must be happy, right?

- Questions**
1. What are the land and the people of Laish like?
 2. What do the Danites conclude about Laish?
 3. Why did they stop by Micah’s house?



Praise Psalm 57a

- Pray**
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that God directs you by His Word
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member