

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](http://frankston.rpca.org.au) [bit.ly/WTrpcaf](http://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](http://airdrierpcs.org)

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. [bit.ly/WkBbl](http://bit.ly/WkBbl) or [bit.ly/3yrBbl](http://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 on 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

**Reading** Judges 16:1-3 Samson’s weakness

**Notes** Few stories in the Bible capture the imagination like Samson and Delilah. But we must remember this is God’s story, written for our instruction and as examples to us. (1 Cor. 10:11) So, how does God instruct us in this account?

We are told in chapter 13 that Samson was a special son, to be raised under a Nazirite vow, to be dedicated to God, and that he would be a deliverer of Israel. Thus far he had had some victories over the Philistines, Israel’s current oppressor. Now, he is again tempted by a wrong relationship with a woman.

He escapes by his own extraordinary strength. *But he did not appear to consider that he had only been able to break out of the city because God had given him the strength to do so. He seemed oblivious to the danger that he had put himself into because he had been so reckless. As far as he was concerned he was a man whom God had endowed with great strength; nothing could stand in his way. This was a very dangerous attitude which eventually led to his tragic fall.* (Robinson)

- Questions**
1. What had God promised about Samson?
  2. What was a repeated weakness Samson gave in to?
  3. What eventually led to Samson’s tragic fall??



- Praise** Psalm 56a<sup>2</sup>
- Pray**
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to depend on God’s strength, not your own, by His help
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

<sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>2</sup> 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

**Reading** Judges 16:28-31 By faith, Samson...

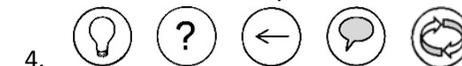
**Notes** Hebrews 11 reminds us that Samson is a hero of faith in the Old Testament – one whose faith we should imitate, as we look to Jesus. Samson was a man flawed in many ways, as we are. His failures are warnings to us – and point us to a Better Judge and Deliverer.

Though he is blinded, bound, and entertaining the idolatrous Philistines – though he came to this condition because he did not realise God had left him – he now begins to see again. “God is my strength,” he realises. So, he prays, “Remember me, God.” The sense seems to be, “You might have forgotten me, God. I had certainly forgotten you. But, now I am remembering. So, I ask You, O Lord God, to remember me once again.”

*He prayed to God to remember him and strengthen him this once, thereby owning that his strength for what he had already done he had from God, and begged it might be afforded to him once more, to give them a parting blow. That it was not from a principle of passion or personal revenge, but from a holy zeal for the glory of God and Israel, that he desired to do this, appears from God’s accepting and answering the prayer. Samson died praying...* (Henry)

*Samson was a child of his times. He lived in a day when ‘everyone did as he saw fit’ (Judges 21:25); one writer describes him as ‘a sort of Israel in concentrated form.’ Although his life serves as a warning, his death is an assurance that it is never too late to call upon the Lord.* (Robinson)

- Questions**
1. What negatives from Samson should we avoid?
  2. What positives from Samson should we imitate?
  3. How does Samson point to Jesus?



- Praise** Psalm 56a
- Pray**
1. Pray that you and your family will live by faith, 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

**Reading** Judges 16:21-27 Blinding, binding, grinding

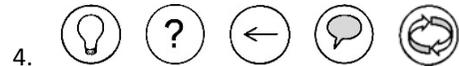
**Notes** Having lost his strength from God, Samson now loses his freedom. Having been blinded by temptation, he is now blinded by the removal of his eyes. Having been bound by his lustful desires, he is now bound by chains. Having been grinded down by his illicit companion, he is now grinding grain as a slave.

The Philistines intent is not to kill him, but to mock him and his God. They will celebrate the victory over Samson as a victory of their false god over Samson’s God. So it often is when we fall into sin – the enemy gains a reason to not just slander us, but to slander and blaspheme our God.

Once a victorious champion over the Philistines, Samson was now a pathetic entertainer for his enemies. Yet, we have a glimmer of hope. Samson’s hair began to grow again. (v22). *The growth of his hair was neither the cause nor the sign of the return of his strength further than as it was the badge of his consecration, and a token that God accepted him as a Nazirite again, after the interruption, without those ceremonies which were appointed for the restoration of a lapsed Nazirite, which he had not now the opportunity of performing.* (Henry)

Stay tuned. For the story is not over yet.

- Questions**
1. How does Samson’s blinding, binding, and grinding reflect his spiritual situation?
  2. What can happen when God’s people fall into sin?
  3. What was significant about Samson’s hair beginning to grow again?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 56a
1. Confess, with your family, your sin which gives God’s enemies cause to slander Him
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** Judges 16:4-9 Samson and Delilah

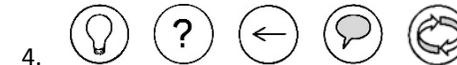
**Notes** After his escape from Gaza, Samson went immediately into another wrong relationship with a woman. Though he loved her, it appears that she was quite willing to use him for her own gain – accepting a request from the Philistines to find and neutralise the secret of his great strength for a large amount of silver.

Did Solomon have Samson and Delilah in mind when God’s Spirit moved him to write, *For she has cast down many wounded, And all who were slain by her were strong men.* Proverbs 7:26? *When Delilah began to probe for the secret of his strength, Samson should have been aware of his danger and, like Joseph (Gen. 39:12; 2 Tim. 2:22), fled as fast as possible. But passion had gripped him, sin had anesthetized him, and he was unable to act rationally.* (Wiersbe)

Instead Samson begins to toy with Delilah as we toy with sin. We rationalise, “I’m not really giving in to sin, so I’m OK.” Yet, like Samson, we often get closer and closer until we willingly cross the line.

For his first pretence, Samson tells Delilah that binding him with fresh bowstrings will leave him weak and defenceless. Yet when Delilah binds him and warns him the Philistines are upon him, he snaps the bowstrings like yarn snaps when burned by fire. Samson 1, Delilah 0.

- Questions**
1. What is God’s design for a man’s relationship to a woman?
  2. What seems to be Samson’s design for such relationships?
  3. Why does Samson, why do we, toy with sin?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 56a
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to flee sin and follow Jesus, 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 16:10-14 Samson and Delilah: Round 2 and 3

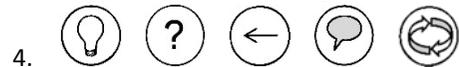
**Notes** Having escaped a first attempt by the Philistines to weaken and capture him, Samson seemed not a bit wiser. *If Samson had stopped visiting Delilah, he would have kept his hair and his power, but he kept going back, and each time she implored him to reveal his secret. Samson didn't know his own heart. He thought he possessed enough moral strength to say no to the temptress, but he was wrong.* (Wiersbe)

And, Delilah seemed not a bit less committed to her resolve to find and betray his secret of his strength. *Sounding remarkably like Samson's Philistine wife (see 14:16), Delilah continued to put pressure on him to reveal his secret.* (Robinson)

In fact, it's hard to decide who is the more wicked here, Samson or Delilah. She keeps asking; then following up on his "admissions"; then calling the Philistines to capture him. He keeps pretending, willingly laying his head on her lap, and breaking free when "the Philistines are upon him!"

So, his offer of new, unused ropes binding his strength held him as a thread would. His offer of weaving his hair into the loom, though closer to the truth, still left him strong and free, for now. She pled, he lied, she tried, he fled. Samson 3, Delilah 0.

- Questions**
1. Why did Samson continue to toy with Delilah?
  2. Why did Delilah continue to seek to betray Samson?
  3. Why do we continue to give in to temptation and sin?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 56a
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to learn from the power of temptation and sin, 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 16:15-21 Samson and Delilah: Final Round

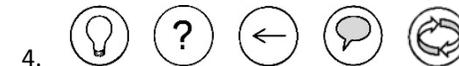
**Notes** Delilah is angry. "How can you say that you love me yet mock me?" Had Samson been thinking, rather than driven by emotions and hormones, he might have asked, "How can you say that you love me, yet try to betray me these three times?"

*Delilah did not give up, nagging him 'until he was tired to death' (v. 16)... She wore his defences down until he had no fight left in him. Eventually he gave her the information she wanted... He fell asleep on Delilah's lap and she called a man to shave off seven braids of his hair.* (Robinson)

Once more she cries out, "The Philistines are upon you!" Once more, he awakes confident of his strength. Yet we come to the saddest line in the story at the end of v20. "But he did not know that the Lord had departed from him." *When he lost his long hair, the Lord left him; and he was as weak as other men. His power was from the Lord, not from his hair; but the hair was the sign of his Nazirite vow. The Spirit who had come upon him with such power had now departed from him.* (Wiersbe)

We may think such could never happen to us. After all, isn't the promise for New Testament believers that God's spirit will be with us always? Yes, it is. Yet we are warned that we can grieve the Spirit or quench the Spirit. May we never fall so deep into sin as to not know that the Lord has left us. Samson 0. Delilah 1100.

- Questions**
1. How might "if you love me" be used as a temptation to sin?
  2. Why did Samson not know he had no strength?
  3. What often happens when we toy with temptation?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 56a
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that Jesus never gave in to temptation and secured your deliverance
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member