

(Through the Bible) Judges 17-21

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the moral decline of Israel during the time of the judges, emphasizing the consequences of idolatry and the absence of God's kingship.

Duration: 51:13

Scripture: Numbers 6:24-26, Judges 17:6, Judges 19:1, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Godly Submission", "Spiritual Regression"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of submitting our lives to God as king. He highlights the negative consequences of people living according to their own desires, stating that it can lead to a regression into an animal-like state. The sermon also mentions the upcoming study of the book of Ruth. The speaker concludes by introducing a chorus that they want the congregation to learn as a way to bless each other before departing.

Transcript

At this point, the Book of Judges, as far as its history, ends. What remains in the Book of Judges is not now in chronological order. This is an appendix to the Book of Judges as we get into chapter 17.

And it tells us, basically, of the moral conditions of the nation of Israel during this time after Joshua. And the story, some of them, take us clear back to the time immediately after Joshua. So, if you can now shift gears in your mind, and go in reverse, we've come to the end of the historic chronological order with Samson.

After Samson, there arises then Samuel. We'll get that after we get through the Book of Ruth. But now, we're going to get into an appendix, and we're going to go back in the next few chapters and examine some of the moral decay that was going on in Israel during the time of the period of the judges.

It just gives us an insight to the moral corruptness that existed among God's people during this time when they lacked a real consciousness of God as their king. So, the first story begins in chapter 17. There was a man who lived on Mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

And he said to his mother, You remember those 1100 shekels of silver that were stolen from you, and you cursed the person who stole them? He said, Let the person who stole this be cursed. He said, Hey, Mom, I did it. And here are the 1100 shekels back.

And she said, Oh, blessed be thou, my son of the Lord and all. I had really intended to take that silver and make some little idols for you. And so she gave him a portion of the silver in order that he might make a little image.

And he gave them to the founder who made a graven image. And they were in the house of Micah, molten images. And the man Micah had a house of gods, and he made an ephod and a teraphim.

And he consecrated one of his sons who became his priest. For in those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes. And therein is a insight into the moral degeneracy.

They had lost the fact that God was to be their king. They lost the consciousness of that fact. And every man, rather than being ruled by God, was doing that which was right in his own eyes.

It was a period of anarchy. Everybody just did what he wanted to do, what was right in his own eyes. It is sort of what they are trying to bring to pass in this existentialism.

Everybody just relate to experience as you feel that you should relate to it. There isn't any really right or wrong way. If it feels good, do it, you know.

If it feels right, do it. And this is the kind of chaotic condition that was going on in Israel. This kind of anarchy where everyone was just doing what was right in their own eyes.

Not really following the government of God or the law of God. Now, Micah, in making these images, was not making really pagan kind of images. But images, no doubt, that would represent God to him.

But in the second commandment, God had expressly forbidden making any graven images or likeness of God to bow down and worship. So he was violating the commandment of God, but trying to make an image of God. He was not turning from Jehovah in that sense of making an image of Baal or Molech or one of the pagan gods.

But he was trying to make an image of God. And then, with the Teraphim and the Ephod, seeking to tie the whole worship of Jehovah together, making a little worship center in his house. Where he has his own little idols in the house where he goes to pray and goes to worship.

Now, this was expressly forbidden by God. And yet, having lost the consciousness of God's presence, he is wanting something to remind him of the presence of God. And thus he's made his little worship center in his house with his little idols and all, the place where he could go and pray.

His own little private altar. Now, whenever a person makes an idol, the very fact that he has made an idol indicates that that person has lost the consciousness of the presence of God. The second thing it indicates is that he is desiring to regain that consciousness of God's presence.

And thus he has set up this as a reminder to him of God's presence. And thus it is actually speaking of a desire to regain something that is lost of vitality of relationship with God. Whenever a person has to set up an image or an idol, it is a testimony that that person has lost something vital in his relationship with God.

And he needs some kind of a little reminder to remind him of God's presence. And thus it is always a mark of spiritual deterioration. Any image, any idol of anything is a mark of spiritual deterioration.

So it is important to note that Micah wasn't really turning his back on Jehovah, for he even speaks of Jehovah. But he has lost something vital in his relationship with Jehovah, which causes him to make these little images and set up a worship center as a place for his prayers. Now there was a young man who lived in Bethlehem who was a Levite.

And he was living there. But he departed from Bethlehem just sort of looking for a place to live. And he came to Mount Ephraim to the house of Micah on his journey.

And Micah said to him, where are you coming from? And he said, I'm a Levite from Bethlehem. And I'm journeying that I can find a place. Micah said unto him, if you'll dwell with me and be a priest in my house, I'll give you ten shekels of silver annually and a new suit and all your food.

So the Levite went in. Now here is a deterioration in the Levite in that he is becoming now a professional religionist, sort of selling himself for religious purposes for an annual salary of ten shekels of silver and a new suit and his daily food. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man and the young man was unto him as one of his own sons.

And Micah consecrated the Levite. The young man became his priest and he was in the house of Micah. Then said Micah, now I know that Jehovah will do me good seeing as I have a Levite as my priest.

So it was a mercenary thing. You know, I know I'm going to prosper now because I got a Levite for a priest. And that's the only reason why he wanted the Levite is so he could prosper.

In other words, it was the idea of using God for gain. Paul speaks in the New Testament of the error of those who think that godliness is a way to gain. He calls it a pernicious doctrine.

He said turn away from such people who say that godliness is a way to get rich. That godliness is a way to prosperity. That godliness is a way to gain.

Paul calls it an evil doctrine. Micah has that concept. Oh, God's going to prosper now.

I've got a Levite for my priest. So he's buying his way in a sense into prosperity in hiring the priest. Now, that is setting the stage for the rest of this story.

You got now this Levite young kid from Bethlehem as a professional religionist, the priest, personal priest of Micah and his house. Now, in those days there was no king in Israel. And the tribe of the Danites sought an inheritance to dwell in for they were unable to drive the Philistines out of that territory of Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza and that beautiful valley area.

And they were only at this point occupied a small little territory, oh, 20 miles from Jerusalem, 15 miles from Jerusalem towards Tel Aviv, the little valley of Eshtol. But this whole territory was still occupied by the Philistines and they couldn't drive them out. And so they were beginning to look for another place to live.

And so they sent out six men to sort of look out over the whole country to see if there isn't another place that they might move that the tribe of Dan might inhabit in order that they could have more territory for farming and all, because that area that they had taken just wasn't sufficient for their needs. And so these men started north and they came to Ephraim, to the house of Micah and they stayed there. And when they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man, the Levite.

And so they turned in, they said unto him, what brought you here? And how much are you making in this place? And what are you doing? And he said unto them, well, I came to Micah and he needed a priest, so he hired me and he gives me 10 shekels of silver a year in a new suit, all my food and I'm his priest. And they said, well, ask counsel of God for us that we might know whether we're going to be prosperous in our search. And so the priest said unto them, go in peace before the Lord is your way wherein you go.

In other words, go in peace. God is going before you and He's going to prosper you in your way. So the five men departed and they came to Laish and they saw the people that were there, how they dwelt carelessly after the manner of the Sidonians.

They were quiet and they were secure and there was no magistrate in the land that might put them to shame for anything. And they were far from the Sidonians and had no business with any man. So they found this city of people, they're Laish, and the people were just really living very carelessly.

They didn't have business or trade with anybody else. They were a long way from Sidon. Actually, they were clear over the Lebanese mountain range from Sidon and they were isolated and really they looked to be an easy prey.

Now they dwelt in a beautiful section of land. Right past the city there flowed the Jordan River and it was near the headwaters of Jordan. So there was no water pollution, the water was clear, it's great and there's good farming territory around there and it's just a beautiful valley, fertile valley.

And they said, wow, look at this, you know, be nice to live up here. So they came back to their tribe and they described the place that they had found. It's beauty and its advantages.

Oh, there's plenty of water, good area to live and all and it's beautiful and it really is, it's one of the most beautiful places in Israel. And so they sent back an army of 600 men in order to take this city. And so when they came back to the Mount of Ephraim, they came back again to this priest.

And these fellows went in and they said, hey fellow, look, we need a priest, our tribe. Wouldn't it be better for you to be the priest over a whole tribe than a priest in just one family? We'll give you a better salary. So the young man went with them, but he ripped off the little idols and all that were there and took them with him.

And so when Micah came home, he found that the idols had been ripped off, the priest was gone, and so some of his neighbors gathered together and they were having a big conflict. They said, well, they went that direction. So Micah went chasing after them.

And these guys are 600 tough guys heading off for war. Micah came up and said, hey, what's the big idea of ripping me off, taking away my priest, and taking away my silver idols and so forth? And he was really laying it on them. And they said, hey man, you looking for trouble? Might as well, you better go home.

There's no sense getting hurt. And so he looked around and saw all these guys with their swords and everything else. So he decided to go home.

Wisdom, the better part of valor. And so they went up with this young man and they came to Laish and they captured it. They destroyed the inhabitants.

And the tribe of Dan, a good portion of them, moved on up and inhabited the upper part of this Hula Valley, where the headwaters of the Jordan River come out from Mount Hermon. And thus that became the territory of the tribe of Dan. And the city was called Dan.

And the river itself was then named Jordan or Out of Dan, because there is the headwaters of the Jordan River and it comes out of Dan. And so the river became named Jordan Out of Dan. So that is just one of the little stories that is told here.

And the second story that gives us an insight to the confusion that existed, both civil and religious, during this particular time has to do with the story of a man who was a Levite. Now again, in chapter 19, it says, it came to pass in those days when there was no king in Israel. Now, no king in Israel.

Israel was intended by God to be a theocracy. God wanted to be the king. He wanted the people to submit to His rule, to His reign.

But the declaration there was no king in Israel meant that the people were not submitting to God. Thus there was confusion. Everybody was doing what he felt was right and there was great confusion.

These things that are told here are not told in a sense of condoning what's happening. In fact, they're told in the other sense of condemning what they're doing, but just showing the confusion that existed during this particular period of the history of the children of Israel. And the whole purpose is just to relay, actually, the confusion that exists during this period of time.

So it came to pass there was no king. There was a certain Levite who also was living in Mount Ephraim and he took him a concubine from Bethlehem Judah. Now, this is wrong that a priest should have a concubine.

Not his wife, just a concubine. This is following, really, the pagan practices of the people that were around him and even the priest. Now, his concubine left him, went out and was a prostitute, returned to her father who was living in Bethlehem, and so after a few months he was missing her and so he decided to go back and talk her into coming back with him.

They had a live-in relationship, living together without marriage. Some of the people today think they are so modern, so chick, you know. We're just living together as though that were, you know, chic, alright? How about you, Ray? CHIC.

Hey, this has been going on for a long time. You're old-fashioned. Nothing modern about that.

Sin's been around from the beginning. So he went down to Bethlehem where she had gone back to her dad to talk her into moving back in with him again. And her dad took a liking for the guy and he was good in his sales pitch and she decided to go back with him.

But the dad said, Oh, you know, stick around and you know, let's just drink and we'll have a good time. And so they drank and got evening and the guy said, Well, I better be... Oh, no, you can't go tonight. Stay until tomorrow, you know, and you can get a start off tomorrow.

So he stayed to the next day and so they got up and they started to celebrate again and they kept drinking through the day and came evening and said, Well, I better be going. Ah, you can't go. It's getting dark.

You know, you might as well wait until tomorrow and leave tomorrow. So he spent the night again and you know, same old thing. And in the afternoon he said, Hey, I've got to be going.

Ah, no, no, spend the night and tomorrow get up real early and get a good start. He said, No, hey, I've got to go. So he saddled up the two donkeys.

He took his servant and the concubine and they started back towards Ephraim from Bethlehem. It was getting evening as they came to Jebus which was later to be Jerusalem, about five miles from Bethlehem. And the servant said, We better turn into Jebus here and spend the night.

And he said, No, I don't want to spend a night in a city that doesn't belong to the Israelites. Let's go on. And so they came to Ramallah or Ramah which is the sort of a northern suburbs of Jerusalem.

And somehow that didn't appeal to them. So they went a little further to a city of the Benjamites, the city of Gibeah. And he said to his servant, Come, let us draw near and we'll spend the night here.

And as the sun went down, they were by Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin and they turned in to lodging Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the street for there was no man that took him into his house for lodging. Now in those days, they didn't have motels, hotels kind of things.

And people were just gracious and they would just take you into their home. If you were a traveler coming along, hospitality was the thing. And they'd say, You know, come and spend the night with us.

And so no one invited him to spend the night. And an old man was coming in from the fields. He'd been working rather late.

And he also was from Mount Ephraim area, which meant that he was of the tribe of Ephraim, not a Benjamite. And he saw this fellow in the street and he said, Hey, what are you doing here in the street? You can't spend the night in the street. And he said, Well, no one's invited me home.

He said, Well, come on home to my house. He said, Where are you from? He said, I'm from Ephraim. I've been journeying from Bethlehem and going back to Ephraim.

Oh, I'm from Ephraim too. Where are you from? Do you know so and so? Yeah, you know, that kind of stuff. And so he invited him home to spend the night with him.

And as it got dark, the men of Gibeah came to the door and they began to pound on the door and they said, Send the man out that we saw coming into your house that we might know him. So now we find that very thing for which God judged Sodom and destroyed it is happening even among his own people there in the tribe of Benjamin. The very same thing that happened when the angels came into the house of Lot in Sodom and the men of the city circled the house and said, Send them out that we might know them or that we might have sexual relations with them or homosexual relations with them.

And here we see the moral depravity that has taken place even among God's people, the Benjamites. And so it's giving you an insight into the moral decay of Israel during the period of the judges. And again, an insight into the whole cultural scene.

The old man said, Hey, this man's my guest. I've got a daughter who's a virgin and here's his concubine. We'll send them out and you do with them whatever you want.

But don't, you know, touch my guest. Women, be thankful for Jesus Christ. What He has done for women's rights.

What Jesus has done for the women is absolutely glorious. You take the cultures of the world where the Christian influence is not strong and look at the place of the woman in those cultures even today. It is Jesus Christ who elevated the woman from something of a chattel, a slave, something to be pawned off by the man's will and elevated her into an equal in the sight of God.

For in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female. There's no superior sex or anything else. There is just a beautiful equality in Jesus Christ.

And Jesus elevated the woman from this place of the pagan cultures where she was put down and subjugated and treated like dirt. And Jesus lifted the womanhood and gave respect and dignity to women which the men weren't willing to grant in their pagan cultures. Go today to Israel and look at the place of the Bedouin women and be thankful for what Jesus Christ has done for you.

Lifting, bringing respect and glory and honor and equality unto the women. But He had not yet come. They were following still the cultures of the people around them.

Here's a man willing to give his daughter, his virgin daughter to a lustful crowd. Don't touch my guest that has come. And so they sent the concubine out and all night long the men raped her one after another until in the morning she crawled back to the steps of the house and there she died.

In the morning when the priest came out, he said, get up, let's get going. What ails you? There was no answer. He touched her and found she was dead.

So he put her on the donkey, took her back to Ephraim to his house and there he butchered her body cutting it into 12 pieces and sending a piece of her body to all of the tribes. Now it had what he hoped it would have. It had a shock effect upon the tribes.

They were horrified to get a part of a torso, a leg, an arm, a head. And they gathered together and this man told them the evil that was done by the Benjamites, by those from the tribe of Benjamin, the city of Gibeah. He told them the horrible evil that had befallen him while he was there.

And the people of Israel were incensed against the Ephraimites, I mean against the Benjamites. And so they decided to go against them in battle. And they gathered an army of 400,000 plus.

And they inquired of the Lord and they said, Who shall go up first? And the Lord said, The tribe of Judah. So the tribe of Judah went up against Gibeah, but the men of Benjamin were tough. They had 700 fellows who could throw a stone with a sling and never miss from 100 yards.

They could come within a hair's breadth of their target at 100 yards with a sling. 700 of them, skillful, tough. The tribe of Judah went up against Gibeah.

The men of the Benjamites came out. Of course, the Benjamites, when they said, they gave them first and all men, they said, Turn over these lewd fellows who have done this thing. We're going to kill them.

And the Benjamites would not turn them over. They said, You come and get them. And so they were more or less challenged for the fight.

And so the men of Judah, Israel, were defeated by the men of Benjamin who killed 22,000 that day in the battle. So the men of Israel came and they encouraged themselves. They set in battle again as they did the first day.

And the children of Israel went up and wept before the Lord until evening. And they asked counsel of the Lord saying, Shall we go up again to battle against the children of Benjamin, my brother? And the Lord said, Go up against him. Now the children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day.

And the men of Benjamin came forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, destroyed down to the ground 18,000 men. And again, they retreated. And now they fasted and prayed and cried unto the Lord.

Now, I must confess at this point, I have confusion. Why would God send them into a battle, say, go into battle in which they're going to get defeated? I don't know. That confuses me.

But the first two days when they went in, they got whipped and though God had said go, even said the tribe that was to go first. I don't understand that. You say, oh, well, you know, that's horrible.

You don't understand. Well, perhaps so. But I don't know everything.

And God said, my ways are not your ways, saith the Lord. My ways are beyond your finding out. Even as a woman this morning asked me after the service, she said, why would God choose Samson if in his foreknowledge, he knew he was going to fail? That's a good question.

I don't know. However, as I say, there are a lot of things in life that I don't know about God. And I'm sort of glad I don't know because that causes me to respect God.

I know He's smarter than I am. Now, if I knew everything God knew, I'd be as smart as God and how could I respect Him? Not only that, it gives me a chance to exercise faith, which I don't like, but I'm forced at times to exercise it. You see, to believe what I don't know is faith.

To believe what I do know is reason, intellect. Now, I know a lot of things and I believe them because my intellect tells me, well, that's right. I can balance it in my intellect.

I can rationalize it. So I say, well, I believe Jesus is the Son of God. Great deal.

There's plenty of historic proof for that. I believe Jesus rose from the dead. Big deal.

There's plenty of historic truth for that and proof. If you can prove anything in history, you can prove that Jesus rose from the dead if history has any value for proof of past events. If you want to prove that Hannibal crossed the Alps, you can prove that Jesus rose from the dead just as much as you can prove that he crossed the Alps or that Washington crossed the Delaware.

So big deal. I believe Jesus rose from the dead. I can prove it historically.

It is the things that I can't prove that I have to just believe by faith that God honors. I say that I believe Jesus is the Son of God. Great.

The devils believe that too. What does that make me? Nothing. But when you come to those areas of faith or belief where there is not the proof and I have to just believe in faith that this indeed did happen, that he

died, yes, that's a historic fact, but that he died for my sins, that's something I accept by faith.

That God laid upon him my sins when he died, I accept that by faith. That he rose, that's a historic fact. But in his resurrection, he provided justification for me.

That's faith. That's what makes me saved is believing what I don't understand. I don't understand how or why he would die for me.

I don't understand how I can be justified by his resurrection, but I believe it because the Bible declares it. And thus there are many things in my Christian experience that I believe though I can't rationalize them. And the things especially when a person says to me, why did God? And someone the other day started out their question, they said, why did God? I said, that's all the further you need to go.

I don't know. I don't know the whys of God. My ways are not your ways, saith the Lord.

My ways are beyond your finding out. And thus, when I cannot reason or intellectualize anything, I then by faith, if God said it, I believe it. By faith, not by reason.

I take a step higher than my reason and I step into that realm of faith, believing it because God said it. God who cannot lie has declared his truth and I believe it though I can't rationalize it or understand it in my mind. So why did God say, yep, go and then allow him to get defeated? I don't know, but it's there.

I believe it. The third day, they fasted, they prayed, they waited upon God. Shall we go again? Yes, go again.

Now this time they changed their strategy a bit. They had some guys sort of hide around the city and when the men of Benjamin then came out, they retreated, drew them on out further from the city and then these men came in the city, set a big fire and the men of Benjamin turned around, saw their city was on fire and the fight was gone out of them and they killed 20,000 of them there in the field. Some of them tried to flee.

They grabbed them, killed 3,000 in another place, killed a couple thousand in another and pretty much wiped out the men from the tribe of Benjamin. In fact, there were 600 men who escaped the slaughter, but the rest of them were wiped out. Now, these men in chapter 21 had made a oath.

They had sworn in Mishpah saying, there shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin for a wife. These Benjamites do these things, none of us will allow them to marry our daughters. It was a vow that they made.

Now, let me say that most vows like this one are stupid. Most of the vows that are given in the Bible are stupid. This is a stupid vow.

Saul made a stupid vow. When he saw Jonathan wiping out the Philistines with his armor bare, he said, curse it be the man who eats anything today until Saul be avenged of all of his enemies. Stupid vow.

Because later on in the day as they were chasing the Philistines, the guys were so hungry and they were getting faint and weak because they didn't have any food. They were running out of energy and they could have really slaughtered a lot more of the Philistines that day. Had a total victory, but this stupid vow of Saul, which really had no sense behind it.

Curse it be any man who eats anything until Saul, sort of an exalting of himself. And of course, Jonathan, his son, didn't hear his old man saying that. He was busy fighting the Philistines.

And running through the forest, he saw this honeycomb and he put his spear out and, you know, reached through. And then he's licking on his spear as he's chasing the Philistines. And the honey, the quick energy, he was revived, you know, and had all that energy and really got after them and was able to go.

And then later on, his old man said, somebody broke my vow today. Who was it? No one would rat on him. So he said, divide in two companies.

All of you and my son and Jonathan will cast lots. Lots fell on Saul and his son. He said, Jonathan, what have you done? Hey, dad, I didn't know what you said.

I'm going through the forest and I saw the honeycomb and I put my spear in and ate it and I was revived. Hey, dad, it was sort of foolish for you to say that. Look how faint the guys are.

We could have wiped out the Philistines totally today if the guys had strength, but they ran out of energy. Saul said, put him to death. What a stupid guy.

No wonder. Well, he admitted himself at the end of his life. He said, hey, I've played the fool.

That's no understatement. Jephthah made a stupid vow. We studied that last week.

Remember, the first thing comes out the door of my house, I'll sacrifice it to burn offering unto the Lord. The Bible says quite a bit about keeping your mouth shut. When you go into the temple of the mouth, when you go into the temple of the Lord, you know, put a lock on your mouth lest you sin with your mouth.

I don't think it's a proverb, but it ought to be. It is better to keep your mouth shut and let people think you're a fool than to open it and dispel all doubts. The problem we get into with our mouths.

Now, here was a foolish vow. They wiped out the Benjamites. Only 600 guys left.

The rest of the Benjamites are wiped out. And now they think, oh, we're not going to have a tribe of Benjamin. The tribe of Benjamin is going to get wiped out.

Oh, that's horrible. Oh, we can't do that. What should we do? Well, is there any city that didn't send anybody? Someone said, well, I didn't see anybody come from Javish Gilead.

So they checked and said, anybody here from Javish Gilead? Nobody there from Javish Gilead. All right, then let's go to Javish Gilead and we'll kill everybody except the virgins. And we'll bring them back and let them marry these guys.

They didn't enter into the vow, you see. No one from Javish Gilead was there to enter into the vow. So, horrible.

You know, it's covering one stupidity with a greater. But, you know, you get into these kind of things where you begin to follow one sin with another. You do one and then it leads to another, another, another.

You get further and further down the line. It's tragic. And so what they did was horrible.

They went to Javish Gilead and they wiped out the city, killed all of the married women, killed all of the men, and they got the virgins and brought them back. But there still wasn't enough. There's still some guys that weren't married.

What are we going to do? Well, Shiloh was the religious center at that particular time. And they would have the feast in Shiloh. And during the feast, the young virgins would come out and do some traditional folk dances.

And so they said to the men of Benjamin, who still didn't have wives, during this feast when these young virgins come out, you guys hide in the bushes and you watch, you see a cute gal that you like, grab her and take off with her. Sort of a reverse of Sadie Hawkins kind of a day. And when the men from Shiloh come to us and say, hey, they've kidnapped our daughters, we'll say, oh, that's all right.

Just let it go and we'll protect you in it. So that year when they had the feast and the young virgins from Shiloh came out and were doing their little ritual traditional dances, these Benjamites were hiding and they each spied them a gal that they liked the looks of and they grabbed them and took off with them. And thus the tribe of Benjamin was spared and they weren't deleted as a tribe in Israel.

But again, no condoning of the Scripture. In fact, a condemning of it in the Scripture. It was wrong.

It was stupid. But that's just the way things were going because they had lost their consciousness of God as king. And so it gives you just a little insight into the civil and religious confusion that existed during the time of the judges.

And again, the chapter ends as this section began. In those days, there was no king in Israel. Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

But I'll tell you, when people do that which is right in their own eyes, quite often it is very, very wrong because of the mentality and the moral level of many people. You can't just let people live as they want. They will revert to an animal state.

How important that we submit our lives to God as king. Next week, the beautiful little book of Ruth. Shall we stand? Let's turn back to number six.

For a long time, I've been wanting us to learn this chorus that Crystal taught us tonight as sort of a departing kind of a chorus. I think it's beautiful. You know, as sort of a conclusion to the service and departing from one another to pronounce this blessing of God upon each other.

And I don't know if Crystal's still here, but if she is, she can probably help me. I don't think I know this chorus, but I think I can start it if you can finish it. Ah, all right, Crystal.

I'll sing the after part. No, tell you what. Let the men sing the first Lord bless you and let the women echo it.

And keep you, the women echo it. And then we all sing together those other parts. So men join with me, women join with Crystal.

Then we'll all sing those parts together. The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine up.

The Lord lift up. The Lord bless thee. And keep thee.

The Lord lift up. The Lord bless thee. And keep thee.

Take his face to shine a light.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/6/SID6340.mp3>

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