

Week 18: May 5 (Apr. 28–May 4)

- The Israelites wanted Gideon to rule over them. His response: “The Lord will rule over you.”
- “No sooner had Gideon died than the Israelites again prostituted themselves to the Baals.”
- “The Israelites cried out to the Lord, ‘We have sinned against you, forsaking our God and serving the Baals’... “The Lord replied, “But you have forsaken me and served other gods, so I will no longer save you. Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble!”
- The tragedy of Jephthah’s oath. “I have made a vow to the Lord that I cannot break.” Why didn’t God intercede?
- The odd use of the word “shibboleth”.
- The story of Sampson, the Nazirite: “dedicated to God from the womb”
- How many times does Delilah try to trick Samson - and why does he fall for her wiles every time?
- After Samson, Israel “had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.”
- The troubling story of the overnight stay in Gibeah - remembering the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Jesus’ words on the cross: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” Compare the context of Psalm 31:5 (Feb. 7/p. 126)
- “Two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside” the women in the tomb: “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!”
- The disciples did not believe the women: “their words seemed to them like nonsense”.
- Two disciples - Cleopas and another unnamed - walking to Emmaus on that first Easter Sunday. Jesus joins them, “but they were kept from recognizing him.”
- “When he was at table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him....”
- Jesus then appears to all the disciples: “repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations.”
- “While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.”
- Begin the very different Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us..”
- “No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.”

- “The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”
- “Nazareth! Can anything good come there?”
- The wedding at Cana; another reference to Jesus’ “brothers” as separate from his “disciples”, suggesting that Jesus did in fact have brothers (and probably sisters)
- Jesus teaches Nicodemus, “No one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” What does this mean?
- “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”
- John the Baptizer, speaking of Jesus: “He must become greater; I must become less.”
- Psalm 104:5 “[God] set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.” Why did this verse prove to be a problem for Galileo in the 17<sup>th</sup> century? (Recall Psalm 93:1 from last week, April 24)
- Proverbs 14:13 -- “Even in laughter the heart may ache, and rejoicing may end in grief.”
- Proverbs 14:15 - “The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps”
- Proverbs 14:21 - “It is a sin to despise one’s neighbor, but blessed is the one who is kind to the needy”