

# ZOOM BIBLE STUDY WORKSHOP

## Practical Wisdom for your Life

**November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, 11:30 AM via Zoom**

### How Did It Come to This?

#### The Danger of Desire

You are what your deep driving desire is: As your deep driving desire is, so is your will; as you will is so is your deed; as your deed is so is your destiny.

*The Upanishads, Hindu Religious Text*

It would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

*C.S. Lewis, The Weight of Glory*

When we do not desire the things of this world for their own sake, we become able to see them as they are. We see at once their goodness and their purpose, and we become able to appreciate them as never before.

*Thomas Merton, No Man Is An Island*

### Centering question

*If there is something you are tempted to desire too much, what would it be?*

### This week's Biblical passage

**Jeremiah 2:1-8, 23-32**

The word of the LORD came to me, saying: <sup>2</sup>Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the LORD: I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. <sup>3</sup>Israel was holy to the LORD, the first fruits of his harvest. All who ate of it were held guilty; disaster came upon them, says the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. <sup>5</sup>Thus says the LORD: What wrong did your ancestors find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthless things, and became worthless themselves? <sup>6</sup>They did not say, "Where is the LORD who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that no one

## Judges 17:1-13 continued

passes through, where no one lives?" <sup>7</sup> I brought you into a plentiful land to eat its fruits and its good things. But when you entered you defiled my land and made my heritage an abomination. <sup>8</sup> The priests did not say, "Where is the LORD?" Those who handle the law did not know me; the rulers transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal and went after things that do not profit.....How can you say, "I am not defiled, I have not gone after the Baals"? Look at your way in the valley; know what you have done—a restive young camel interlacing her tracks, a wild ass at home in the wilderness, in her heat sniffing the wind! Who can restrain her lust? None who seek her need weary themselves; in her month they will find her. <sup>25</sup> Keep your feet from going unshod and your throat from thirst. But you said, "It is hopeless, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will go." <sup>26</sup> As a thief is shamed when caught, so the house of Israel shall be shamed—they, their kings, their officials, their priests, and their prophets, <sup>27</sup> who say to a tree, "You are my father," and to a stone, "You gave me birth." For they have turned their backs to me, and not their faces. But in the time of their trouble they say, "Come and save us!" <sup>28</sup> But where are your gods that you made for yourself? Let them come, if they can save you, in your time of trouble; for you have as many gods as you have towns, O Judah. <sup>29</sup> Why do you complain against me? You have all rebelled against me, says the LORD. <sup>30</sup> In vain I have struck down your children; they accepted no correction. Your own sword devoured your prophets like a ravening lion. <sup>31</sup> And you, O generation, behold the word of the LORD! Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of thick darkness? Why then do my people say, "We are free, we will come to you no more"? <sup>32</sup> Can a girl forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me, days without number.

## Discussion questions and background

1. Who stole the mom's money? Why does he return it?
2. What does the mom do with some of the money? What sort of idol does she make?
3. What is weird about this whole thing? How does verse 6 explain it?
4. Why does Micah want the Levite? What does he think it will get him?
5. What is the focus of each person in the story? Why is that smallness dangerous?
6. How does God break past the smallness of our worlds in Jesus?

## Closing thoughts

If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world.

*C.S. Lewis*

The reward of the search is to go on searching. The soul's desire is fulfilled by the very fact of its remaining unsatisfied, for really to see God is never to have had one's fill of desiring Him.

*Gregory of Nyssa*