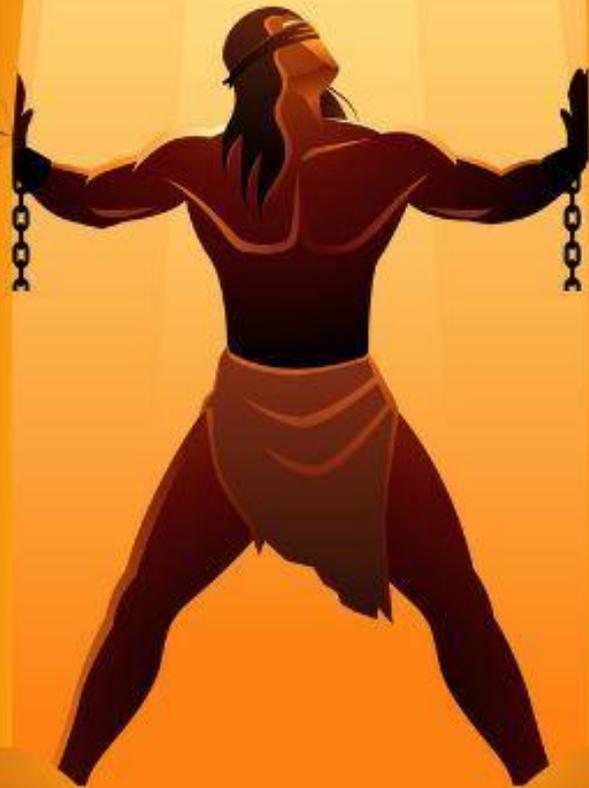
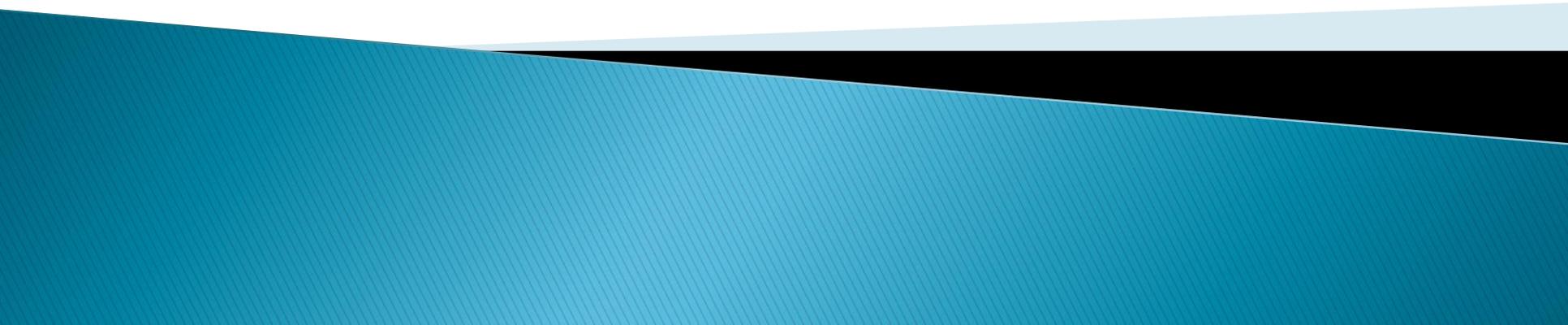


Lesson 12: The Judges

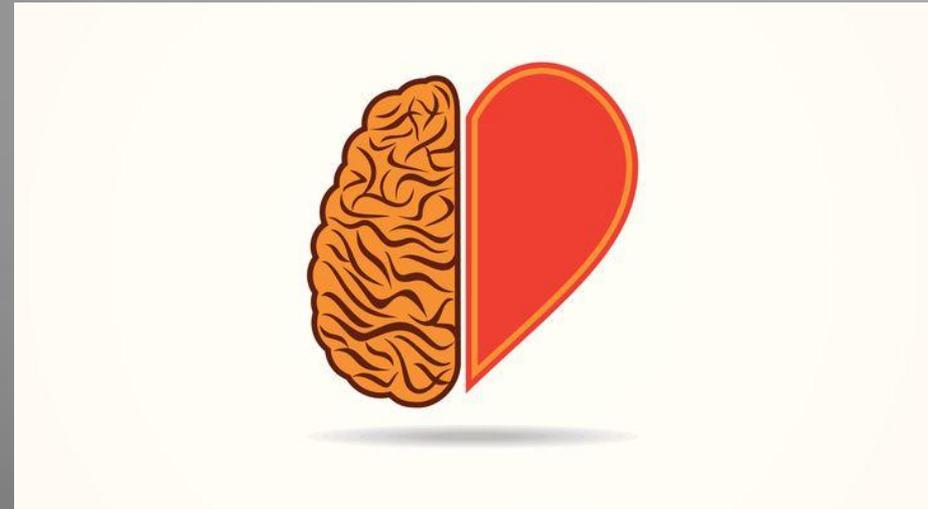


**Icebreaker: Can you think of
a time when you lost your
temper or did something
foolish without thinking?
What were the
consequences?**



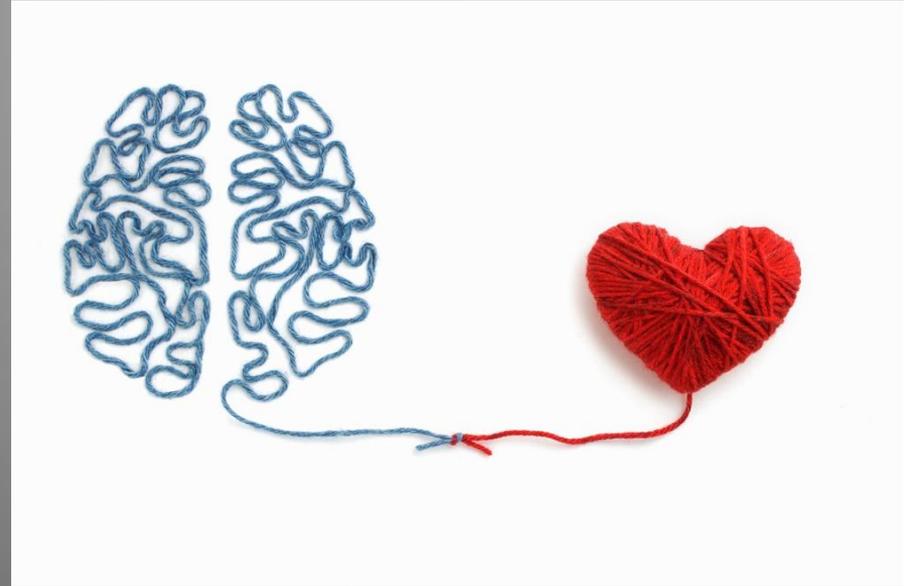
Heart vs. head

- Sometimes, we might blurt something out in anger, causing hurt feelings
- Sometimes, we might do something dangerous and we or somebody else gets hurt
- Sometimes, our words and actions can cause problems for a very long time
- Examples:
 - Cheating
 - Lying/Gossip
 - Physical violence



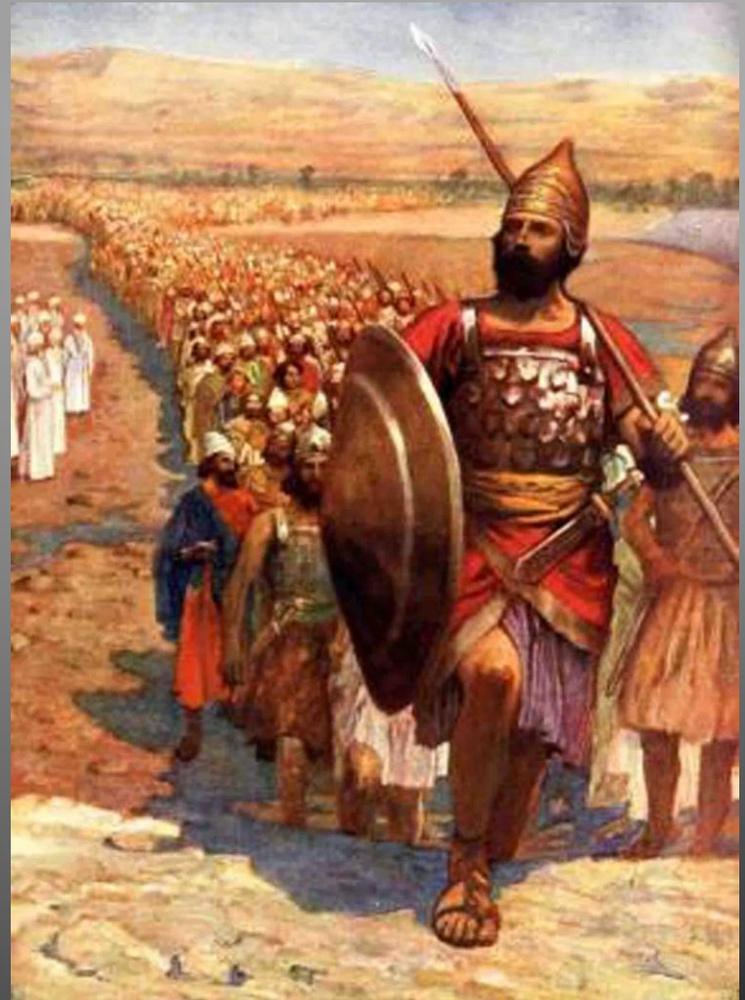
Heart vs. head (continued)

- ▶ Some emotions can be good and help to enhance our lives, but we need to be careful not to be ruled by them
- ▶ Emotions and feelings can change quickly, so we need someone we can rely upon at all times
- ▶ God is that Someone, because He never changes and always wants the best for us



Right in their own eyes

- ▶ When we last saw God's people, Joshua was their leader and they had conquered the Promised Land
- ▶ However, they didn't do everything God said, because there were still other people who didn't worship the true God in Canaan



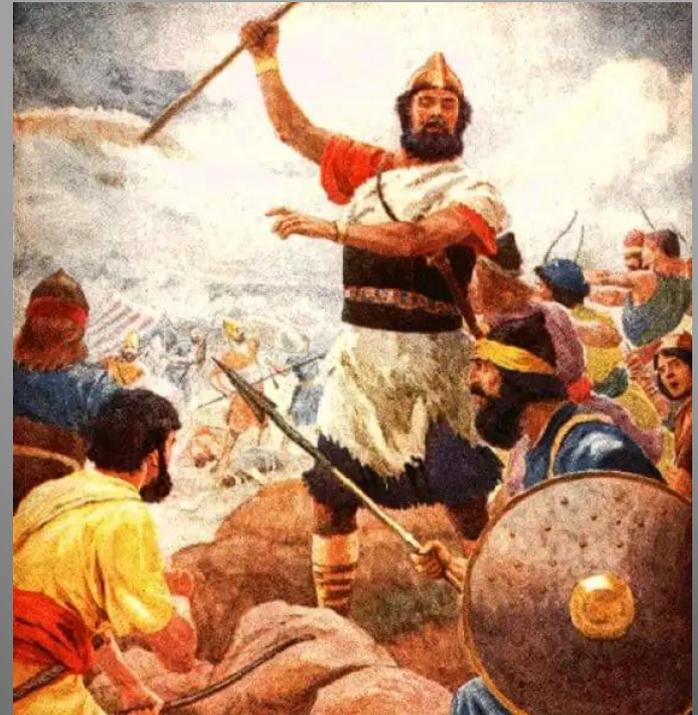
Right in their own eyes (continued)

- ▶ Because the unbelievers stayed, it was easy to start following their gods and God's people started to do whatever they wanted
- ▶ In order to help His people get back on track, God gave them judges, who would lead the military and serve as examples
- ▶ Despite them being chosen by God, not all of them were good all the time and some did bad things
- ▶ Read Judges 3:9–11. Who was the first judge?



Othniel: the first judge

- ▶ The first judge was a man named Othniel
- ▶ He was the younger brother of Caleb, one of the two faithful spies
- ▶ After 8 years of bondage, God sent His Spirit upon Othniel and helped him defeat the king of Mesopotamia
- ▶ The land was peaceful for 40 years until Othniel died
- ▶ Read Judges 3:12–14. What pattern do we start to see?



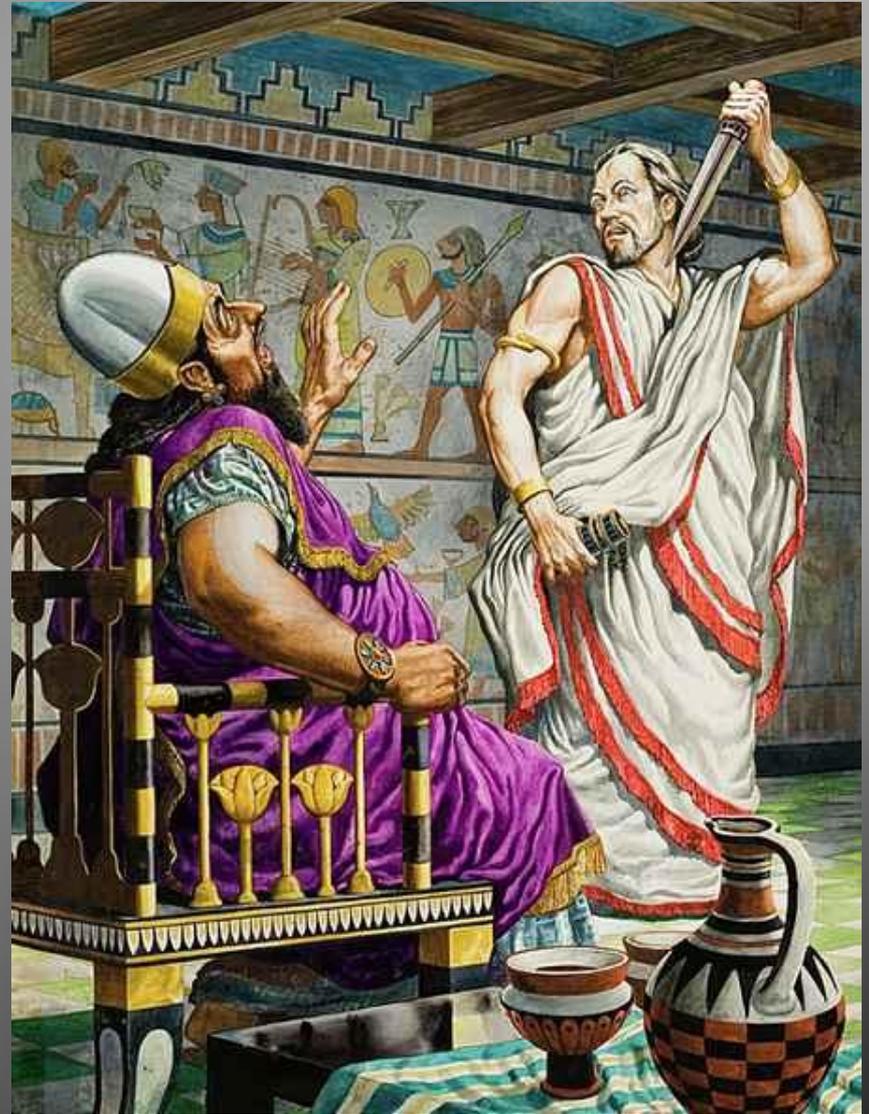
Vicious cycle

- ▶ In the book of Judges, we see God's people sin, get conquered, cry out to God, get delivered by God's appointed judge, but then they fall into idolatry and sin again
- ▶ Unfortunately, the people never seem to learn
- ▶ We do the same thing today: we sin, we are sorry, and God forgives us, but we go back to those sins later
- ▶ The only way to permanently solve this problem is through Jesus, because He saves us from all past, present, and future sins, making us holy forever
- ▶ Read Judges 3:15–30. Who was the next judge after Othniel?



Ehud

- ▶ Very often, God chooses people who are seen as weak or odd or unassuming to do His work
- ▶ The next judge was a man named Ehud, who was left-handed (where we get the worst sinister)
- ▶ Ehud was sent to deliver a message to the king of Moab, but secretly pulled out a sword and killed the king with his left hand
- ▶ Read Judges 4:4–5. What was unique about the next judge?



Deborah, the prophetess

- ▶ The next judge was a woman named Deborah
- ▶ Deborah told Barak, a military commander, to follow God's orders and attack, but he wouldn't
- ▶ Because men like Barak were not doing their job as military or spiritual leader, women like Deborah had to step up
- ▶ Read Judges 4:15–22. How was this victory strange?



Deborah, the prophetess (con.)

- ▶ Instead of winning a victory in battle, Barak found that his enemy Sisera had already been killed in a tent by woman named Jael
- ▶ This was anti-climactic and a shameful display of poor leadership by Barak
- ▶ Read Judges 6:11–12, 14–16. Who did God call to be judge in these verses?



Gideon

- ▶ God called Gideon, a humble man from the tribe of Manasseh
- ▶ Gideon was afraid of attacking Midian, but God gave him signs and he finally agreed
- ▶ Read Judges 7:2–7, 19–22. Why was this a weird battle?



Gideon (continued)

- ▶ Gideon went into battle with only 300 men against thousands of Midianites, but God still gave them the victory
- ▶ Instead of fighting, they shouted, broke clay pots, and blew their trumpets by the enemy camp, so the Midianites attacked themselves and ran away
- ▶ Read Judges 11:1. Which judge are we introduced to here?



Jephthah

- ▶ Jephthah, a mighty warrior and son of a prostitute
- ▶ God chose him to be the leader that helped Israel defeat the Ammonites, but he was boastful about his abilities and made a vow
- ▶ Read Judges 7:29–32, 34–36. What was the consequence of Jephthah's vow?



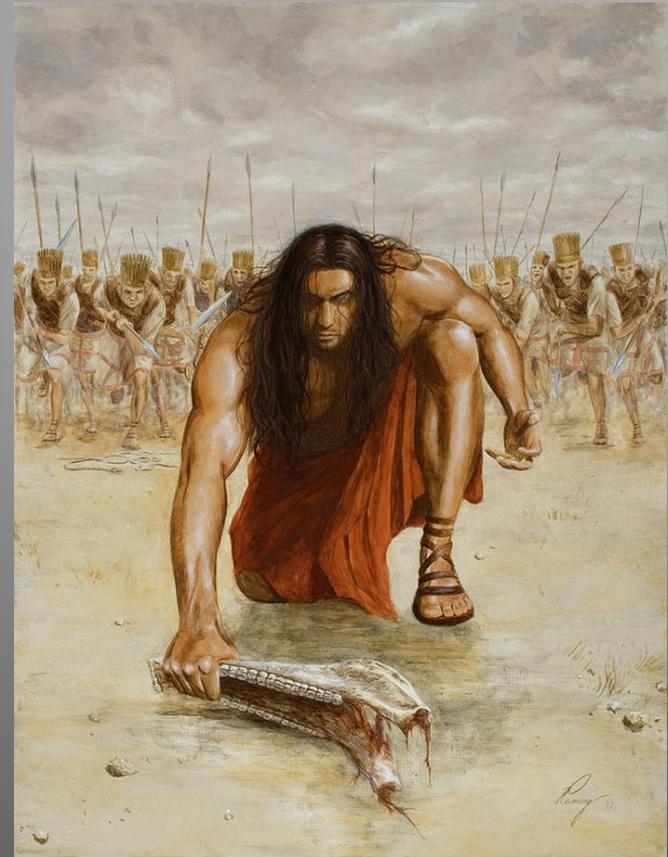
Jephthah (continued)

- ▶ Jephthah made a vow to win the victory and sacrifice the first thing that came to his tent afterward
- ▶ Sadly, it was his daughter who greeted him first, but he had to keep the vow he made
- ▶ This shows us that we shouldn't make foolish promises or swear by God's name, because we don't know how everything will turn out
- ▶ Read Judges 13:2–5, 24. Who did God set apart to be a judge in these verses?



Samson

- ▶ God set apart Samson to be Israel's judge
- ▶ An angel told Samson's mother that her son would be a Nazirite, meaning he couldn't cut his hair or drink alcohol
- ▶ But God gave Samson an incredible gift to be able to save His people from the Philistines
- ▶ Read Judges 16:4–6. What was Samson's gift?



Samson (continued)

- ▶ Samson's gift was his strength and he defeated the Philistines many times in battle and for revenge
- ▶ The Philistines wanted to take his strength away and knew he had a weakness for women, so they sent Delilah to find the secret of his strength
- ▶ Read Judges 16:16–21. What was the secret and what happened to Samson?



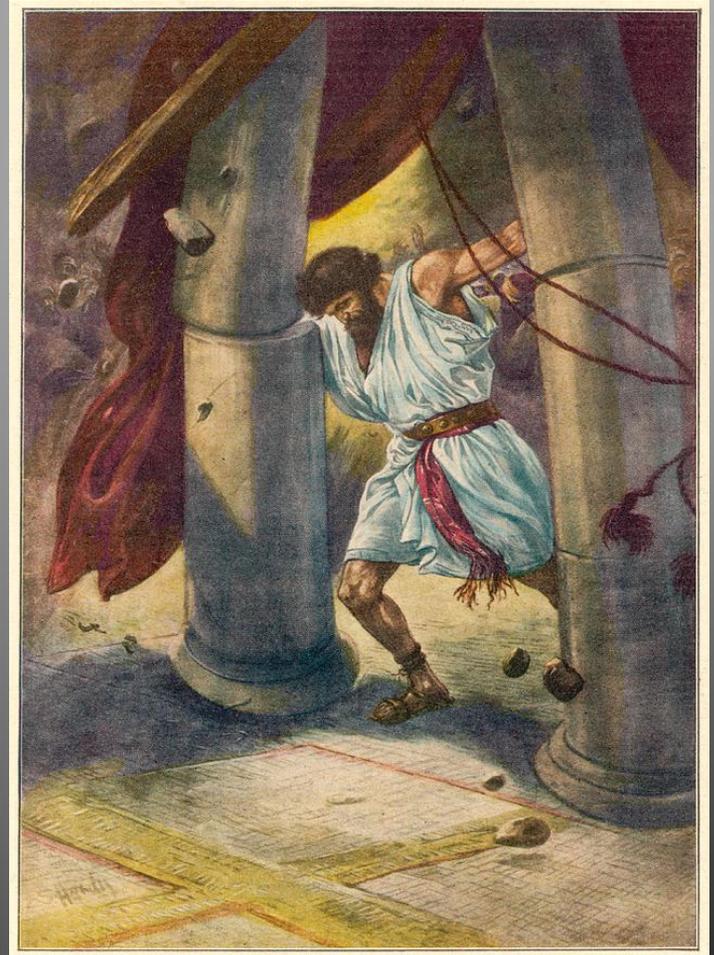
Samson (continued)

- ▶ They found that if his hair was cut, God's spirit left him and he was no longer strong, so Delilah cut his hair
- ▶ Then the Philistines captured him, blinded him, and threw him into prison
- ▶ Read Judges 16:22, 28–32. How did God redeem Samson?



Samson (continued)

- ▶ After his head was shaved, Samson's hair grew back
- ▶ He prayed that God would give him strength one more time and God rewarded Samson's trust in Him
- ▶ He pushed the pillars of the building down and the building collapsed on him and the Philistines



God's way

- ▶ During the time of the Judges, most people did what they wanted and not what God wants
- ▶ Because of that, things went badly and people were hurt
- ▶ Do people still do this today?



God's way (continued)

- ▶ Yes, people still do this and the same thing happens, but God's way is always better
- ▶ If we do what God says, we will still have some problems, but God helps us to get through them
- ▶ And when we mess up, we confess our sins and God lovingly forgives us because of Jesus



Homework

- ▶ If not done already, go through and complete all of lesson 12 and write in your answers when asked for

