

Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

"How I have loved thy law, O Lord! The whole day it is my meditation." (Ps 118:97)

Judges 17:6; 21:25

"In those days there was no king in Israel;
everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (OSB)

The remaining chapters of the Book of Judges consist of a series of vignettes—short stories—that provide windows into the complete corruption and disintegration of Israel's life, morally, socially, politically, religiously. The intent of the author/narrator of Judges is clear, for chapters 17-21 are bracketed by the almost identical refrain: "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (see also Judg 18:1; 19:1). That is, Judges functions within the Scriptural narrative as an "apology" (argument in defense) for kingship in Israel, and particularly for the Judah King (David) that has already been anticipated in Genesis 49, Numbers 22-24, and in Deuteronomy 17 as a "student of the Law."

In the first vignette, Judg 17:1-13, we are shown the chaos in Israel's institutions and practices of worship. Contradicting the Second Commandment and the principle of centralized worship (Deut 12), a certain Micah from Ephraim fashions a silver idol and presumes to consecrate his own house as a worship center, ordaining his own son a "priest." A Levite from Judah—who should have been devoted to the Tabernacle—joins in this charade becoming the high priest, as it were, of the shrine, foreshadowing the corrupting effect the Northern Kingdom (Israel) will have on the Southern Kingdom (Judah) later in Israel's history.

The second vignette, Judg 18:1-31, is a continuation of the first and presents a parody of the original Conquest. The Tribe of Dan—from which Samson hailed—having not secured its own inheritance in the Land carries out a vicious and gratuitous attack on the "quiet and secure" people of Laish (modern Tel Dan) after first stealing Micah's idol and his Levite "faux priest" and nearly instigating a civil war. This "faux worship" lasts until the exile (Judg 18:30).

The third vignette, Judg 19-21, plays out in several scenes. In the first scene, Judg 19, a Levite in Ephraim takes a Judahite concubine, and upon their return trip from Bethlehem, they bypass Jebus (= pagan Jerusalem) to spend the night with a gracious host at Gibeah which is in the territory of the Tribe of Benjamin—from which the infamous King Saul will come. To illustrate the depravity to which Israel has sunk, the narrator portrays the events that unfold in ways that deliberately evoke the narrative of Sodom & Gomorrah (Genesis 19): Just as the inhabitants of Sodom demand that Lot hand over the "men" (= angels) that they may "have relations" with them, and Lot offers his daughters instead, so the Benjamite "sons of lawlessness" demand the same of the man hosting the Levite and his concubine. What ensues is an almost unspeakable horror (Judg 19:25-30).

The brutal rape of the Levite's concubine ignites an all-out civil war of Israel against the tribe of Benjamin—with the Tribe of Judah (from which King David comes) taking the lead (Judg 20:18). As with Sodom, the city of Gibeah is destroyed by fire with a pillar of smoke rising to heaven (Judg 20:40; Gen 19:28). Benjamin having become like the Canaanites, Israel must engage in Conquest against Benjamin. In Judg 21, Israel swears an oath together not to give their women to the Tribe of Benjamin as wives. Realizing that this would lead to the extinction of Benjamin, Israel hatches a "plan." The first "solution"—kill off all the men and married women of a whole city (Jabesh Gilead) who were not present when the oath was made, and take their virgin daughters as a supply of wives for the decimated Tribe of Benjamin (Judg 21:1-14)! The second "solution"—the abduction and rape-like forced marriage of the women of Shiloh (Judg 21:15-25).

The question hangs: "Where is the king who will save Israel from itself?"



ST. PHILIP ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the
Antiochian Archdiocese

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH

○○○

His Grace Bishop THOMAS

○○○

Father Noah Bushelli, Pastor

215-954-9286

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Father James Thayer

215-692-0890

March 15, 2020

SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

COMMEMORATIONS:

AGAPIUS THE MARTYR & His COMPANIONS
MANUEL THE NEW MARTYR OF CRETE
HOLY APOSTLE ARISTOBULOS OF THE SEVENTY,
BISHOP OF BRITAIN

Tone 6 - Eothinon 6
Orthros Gospel: St. Luke 24:36-53
Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3
Liturgy Gospel: St. Mark 2:1-12

RESURRECTION TROPARION - Tone 6 - When Mary stood at thy grave, looking for thy sacred Body, angelic powers shone above thy revered tomb, and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led'st hades captive and wast not tempted thereby; thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world. O thou who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to thee!

APOLYTIKION FOR ST. GREGORY PALAMAS - Tone 8 - O Star of Orthodoxy, support of the Church and its teacher, O comeliness of ascetics, and incontestable champion of those who speak in theology, Gregory the wonder-worker, the pride of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, implore thou constantly for the salvation of our souls.

TODAY:

- ORTHROS & Confession 8:45 a.m.
- Divine LITURGY 10 a.m.
- Coffee Hour, Catechism, SS, & Teens 11:45 a.m.
- Parish Council, 12:45 p.m.
- Pan-Orthodox Lenten Vespers (here at St. Philip), 4 p.m.

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Office Hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 - 3:00

Fr Noah & Fr James are available for hospital visits. If you or anyone you know is in the hospital or homebound and would like a visit, please call the church office.

Weekly Ministries & Stewards:

This Week:

PROSPHORA BREAD:	Gabi & Catalin Tinjala	Next Week (Mar 22):	MaryLynne Black
EPISTLE READER:	Jennifer Howanetz		Tabitha Simpson
USHERS:	Sdn. Luke & Rdr. Nathan		Dan M. & Sdn. Ben
ALTAR CANDLES:	Neno Family	----	
	2-year Memorial for Constantine Neno		
ALTAR BOYS:	"Archangel Michael"	"Archangel Gabriel"	
GREETERS:	Teen SOYO	Colin & Sandra Miller	
CLEANING TEAM:	Natalia M. & Moody family	Sdn. John & Maxine; Tatiana Yau	
COFFEE HOUR:	Fasting Potluck	St. Maria of Paris Fellowship	

EVERYONE is invited to stay for refreshments after the Divine Liturgy. Your assistance in cleanup is appreciated.

Mark Your Calendar:

Game Night & Potluck (sponsored by the Teens)

Saturday, March 21, after Vespers

LENTEN REREAT – March 28

"Recollecting Glory: Orthodox Education
for Wisdom, Virtue, and Joy"
w/ Dr. John Mark Reynolds
Mark your calendar!

Holy Wednesday Schedule Change

Holy Unction at 4 p.m.
Bridegroom Orthros 7 p.m.
w/ Anointing of Holy Unction

We live Pascha to Pascha!

April 19

Pray For:	
Living	Departed
Doris	
John	
Lasha B	
Otari B	
Daniel H	
John	
Zerfenesh	
Tsige	
Maximos	
Eyassu	
Gloria	
Thomas, Elizabeth & all Missionaries	<u>Catechumens</u>
New & Expectant Mothers & children	Evan, Robert, Todd, Kendra, Liesel, Todd, John Moses, Virginia, Conor, Matthew, Shaun, Tina, Michael
Inquirers and those who don't know God's love	<u>St. Nina's List</u> Andrea, Derek, Bennett

OUTREACH COLLECTION: Baby Care Items

EVANGELISM CHALLENGE: "Pray for Mission Priests"

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN PHILIP -- FOUNDER
A SISTERHOOD SERVING CHRIST THROUGH SERVING OTHERS



In honor of Antiochian Women's Month, throughout March the epistle readings during the Divine Liturgies will be chanted by the women of our parish. Glory to God for all the women of our parish, for their labors and ministry with and for us!

YOUR FLOWER OFFERINGS support the beautification of our church during this holy season. Flower offering envelopes are available on the literature rack. Thank you!

This Week: **GREAT LENT**

(Most services are preceded by available times for Confession.)

Mon, Mar 16:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m. Great Compline 7 p.m.
Tues, Mar 17:	Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 11 a.m. SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.
Wed, Mar 18:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy 7 p.m., w/ Fasting Potluck
Thu, Mar 19:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.
Fri, Mar 20:	Presanctified Liturgy 10 a.m., w/ Fasting Potluck Akathist w/ Youth Choir, 7 p.m.
Sat, Mar 21:	Altar Boy Training, 3:30 p.m. Catechism Seminar, 4:30 p.m. Youth Choir rehearsal, 5 p.m. VESPERS 6 p.m., Confession 7 p.m. Game Night & Potluck after Vespers
Sun, Mar 22:	SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS ORTHROS & Confession 8:30 a.m. Cross Procession, 9:45 a.m. Divine LITURGY 10 a.m. Coffee Hour, Catechism, SS, & Teens 11:45 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, 12:45 p.m. Pan-Orthodox Lenten Vespers 4 p.m. (at St. Mary's UOC, Allentown, PA)

Preparation for Confession **Sixth Commandment**

"You shall not murder."

Have I caused the injury or death of any one, or wished that I were dead? Have I done anything to shorten my own life or that of someone else by injuring health, or through evil and intemperate living? Have I given way to anger, or harmed others with words or actions? Have I defamed others who needed help, or failed to stand up for those unjustly treated? Have I been cruel to anyone? Have I mistreated animals or destroyed any life unnecessarily? Have I failed to forgive anyone or harbored evil thoughts against them?

ATTENDANCE: At Vespers on Mar 7: 50 Divine Services on Mar 8: 195
OFFERINGS: Candles, \$359.26. Collections, \$3,140. Youth, \$1. Book Shelf Ministry, \$133. Camping Fund, \$250. Needy Fund, \$150. Sunday School, \$50. Teen Fund, \$50. Women's Fund, \$100. Stewardship, \$5,725. Total received: \$9,958.26.