

- Gerard & Sarah spoke at this service, and it was also communion, so this was deliberately short!

A world away!

- **Completely irrelevant!**
 - what has a passage like the one we've just read got to do with the real world?
 - I can see the bewilderment in my friends eyes, hear the scorn in their voices that I would even consider such stuff something to base my life on!
- Bizarre, strange, weird!
 - but there are telling points of connection!

Superstition

- then: v.2, curse had power, just by being uttered
- today: ladders, horoscopes, lucky items, lottery, occult

False belief about God

- then: v.5, could worship God however you liked
- today: God won't judge, send folk to hell

Choose your own God

- then: v.3-5, made an idol
- today: choose what to put top in our lives; career, success, pleasure, football, relationships...

False hope

- then: v.13, hope of a secure future
- today: all will be well - in life, or beyond it

Utterly selfish

- then: Levite's self-serving actions!
- today: where do I start?!

- At its heart this is about God and his people
 - v.6, Israel had no king (God as their king..., not yet embodied in an earthly king)
- And God has removed himself
 - then: eg 18:5,6 - Danites ask priest to check with God; but God isn't asked, the priest just says yes!
 - then: God never speaks or acts at all in these passages
 - today: look around at the world and the church in the West and you'd be tempted to agree!

Conclusion

- In Judges we have a clearing of the stage:
 - sin is clearly serious, we need a Saviour...
 - but the book ends with no spiritual hope, and as we'll see next week no military hope either
 - in other words, its just like our world today - a generation back you'd have said our land bore similarities to the early part of Judges; today its like the end.... and we've made that transition in a a generation - Judges runs for a couple of hundred years, give or take!
- In the context of the book the implication is that God alone can save:
 - human saviours don't cut the mustard!
 - and in particular, as we saw in the hints in the Samson story, we are directed towards the one who is hinted at and yearned for by the author of Judges...
 - the true Saviour and deliverer, who would be perfectly pure and upright, and able to deliver absolutely
- **Will you trust in the Saviour who died on a Cross?**
 - will we point to him as the only answer?
 - that's what communion speaks of too...!