IN THE WORLD

John 17:9–19

LESSON 10
November 8, 2026

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

LUCKY CHARMS

Twelve Major League Baseball teams have spent the last month competing for a spot in the World Series. Some fans of the Milwaukee Brewers believe their superstitions helped to propel the team toward its first-ever World Series title. In addition to following particular game-day rituals, some fans have even taken it upon themselves to "ensure" victory through superstitious items, such as an unwashed jersey, a "lucky" shirt and pair of shoes, and a rally flag. These seemingly ordinary items hold a special place among Brewers fans, who believe these lucky charms ensured the team's World Series victory.

MISPLACED TRUST

The events of today's lesson take place amid war between the Israelites and the Philistines. The sons of the priest Eli concoct a wild plan: They will take the ark of the covenant into battle. Surely, the nation's gold-plated lucky charm will ensure victory. However, their plan fails. Israel loses the battle, the ark is captured, and Eli's sons are killed. When Eli hears this news, he dies tragically. Then, when his daughter-in-law learns that her husband has been killed, she goes into labor with child. With her final words, she mourns what will become of the nation, now that God seems to have turned away. The Israelites treated the ark like a lucky charm, rather than as a physical reminder of God's faithfulness and holy presence.

1. Have you ever owned an item that you consider a "good luck charm" or treated with superstition?
2. In what ways might God's people be tempted to treat him as a "lucky charm" in order to secure a particular outcome?
3. What practices can help us remain faithful to God and prevent us from viewing him or his work as a charm to ensure our comfort?

Additional Resources

Any videos or web materials are for your personal use. If you play any media files in class, be sure to have the necessary rights to do so.

Playlists

Contemporary Worship Weekly
Echoes Worship Weekly *(featuring African-American music artists)*
Traditional Worship Weekly

Study Resources

Devotion: Theology of Work on "The Perils of Treating God Like a Good Luck Charm (1 Samuel 4)"
Commentary: Thomas L. Constable's "The Capture of the Ark 4:1b-22"
Commentary: David Guzik on "1 Samuel 4 – Capture of the Ark of the Covenant"

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