

Judges 3:1-6

¹ Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to test Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan.

² It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, to teach war to those who had not known it before.

³ These are the nations: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. ⁴ They were for the testing of Israel, to know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. ⁵ So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁶ And their daughters they took to themselves for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.

DISCUSSION:

- Does God leave “nations” in the world or in our lives that we may “know war” and “teach war”?
- How does God test us today? How well do we respond in keeping His commands? See Vs 4.
- Think for a moment about the ways you have married the world and served its gods.

- What can we do to divorce the world and its gods? II Cor 6:14-18

Judges 3:7-11

Judge Othniel:

⁷ And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.

They forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth. ⁸ Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. ⁹ But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother. ¹⁰ The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. ¹¹ So the land had rest forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

DISCUSSION:

- In what ways has the Body of Christ forgotten the Lord? In what ways have we done evil?
- What are some examples of you crying to the Lord for His deliverance?
- Name issues where God has delivered the Body of

Christ from bondage or captivity.

- Can you name a person God has used to help deliver you?

Judges 3:12-30

Judge Ehud:

¹² And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the LORD. ¹³ He gathered to himself the Ammonites and the Amalekites, and went and defeated Israel. And they took possession of the city of palms. ¹⁴ And the people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

¹⁵ Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. The people of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab. ¹⁶ And Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length, and he bound it on his right thigh under his clothes. ¹⁷ And he presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. ¹⁸ And when Ehud

had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who carried the tribute. ¹⁹ But he himself turned back at the idols near Gilgal and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." And he commanded, "Silence." And all his attendants went out from his presence. ²⁰ And Ehud came to him as he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." And he arose from his seat. ²¹ And Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly. ²² And the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not pull the sword out of his belly; and the dung came out. ²³ Then Ehud went out into the porch and closed the doors of the roof chamber behind him and locked them.

²⁴ When he had gone, the servants came, and when they saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, "Surely he is relieving himself in the closet of the cool chamber." ²⁵ And they waited till they were embarrassed. But when he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber, they

took the key and opened them, and there lay their lord dead on the floor.

²⁶Ehud escaped while they delayed, and he passed beyond the idols and escaped to Seirah. ²⁷When he arrived, he sounded the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim. Then the people of Israel went down with him from the hill country, and he was their leader. ²⁸And he said to them, "Follow after me, for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand." So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites and did not allow anyone to pass over. ²⁹And they killed at that time about 10,000 of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men; not a man escaped. ³⁰So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years.

DISCUSSION:

- Reflect on some areas where you returned to sin and have forgotten God. Read Prov 26:11.
- Why did you return to sin? What caused you to come back to God?
- What are some drastic measures we can take to eliminate sin from our lives? Read Mark 9:42-50 and apply.

- When you have followed drastic measures to be righteous before God have you seen other victories follow? What were they?

Judges 3:31

Judge Shamgar:

³¹After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed 600 of the Philistines with an oxgoad, and he also saved Israel.

DISCUSSION:

- We don't know much about Shamgar, we do know he was not an Israelite, yet God used him to deliver Israel. Are you willing to let God use you in ways you didn't expect? Are you willing to let God use people you didn't expect?
- Are you willing to let God use you according to His plan, not yours?

APPLICATION

- Ehud went against cultural norms by making and using a left handed sword. What are some ways we can go against the culture to point toward Christ?
- What are some areas in your life that you need deliverance from? Are you willing to take steps to remove them through the power of the Holy Spirit?
- Are you prepared to be someone God uses to help deliver someone else?

FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

April 3, 2011

Return to God

Focal Passage: Judges 3

Cross References: Mk 9:42-50, II Cor 6:14-18, Prov 26:11

Central Idea: God promised to be with the nation of Israel, but His judgment always comes when we follow our own way.

Lesson Idea: God always judges rebellion, but He is always ready to accept and deliver those who have a repentant heart.

Background: Judges is in direct contrast to the book of Joshua. This book is characterized by the consistent defeat of Israel because of their rebellion against God. Some key phrase found in the book are "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord", "In those days there was no king in Israel", and "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes".

The term Judge found in 2:16, 18, 10:2, 11:27, 12:9, 11, 15:20 and 16:31 is a Hebrew word that means "to deliver" or "to rule." The judges of Israel had a wide range of responsibilities. Like their modern counterparts, Old Testament judges could decide controversies and hand down verdicts (Ex 18:16). These judges were also involved in the execution of their judgment in both vindicating the righteous (Ps 26:1) and destroying the wicked (Ex 7:3). Many judges were God's

appointed military leaders who, empowered by God's Spirit (6:34, 15:14), fought Israel's oppressors and thereby delivered the people. Later, Israel's king functioned as the national judge (I Sam 8:5). Ultimately, Israel's perfect Judge is God. He alone is capable of flawlessly judging the wicked and delivering the righteous (Is 11:4). The author of Hebrews recorded 3 of Israel's judges as men of great faith and included them in chapter 11, showing the importance and reverence due those called by God to judge and lead by putting them side by side with other great men of the Old Testament like Abraham, Moses and David.

Bible in a Year Readings

Mar 20-27, 2011

Mar 27: Joshua 16-18

Mar 28: Joshua 19-21

Mar 29: Joshua 22-24

Mar 30: Judges 1-2

Mar 31: Judges 3-5

April 1: Judges 6-7

April 2: Judges 8-9

April 3: Judges 10-12

Highlights of the Week:

Josh 16-18: The land divided

Josh 20: The cities of refuge

Josh 24: Joshua's farewell address

Josh 24:29-31: Joshua's death

Josh 24:32: Bones of Joseph buried

Judges 2: Death and burial of Joshua

Judges 3: Ehud and Eglon

Judges 4: Deborah and Barak

Judges 6-8: Gideon

Judges 11-12: Jephthah a mighty man