

## **230104-4 Judges 3, The First Three Judges, Othniel, Ehud & Shamgar—CThurman**

In our study of the book of Judges we left off at the end of chapter 2 and fast-forwarded to chapter 17 and read through to the last chapter of the book, chapter 21. We fast-forwarded because the history of this section of Scripture actually falls between Jud.2.10, 11. Phinehas, Israel's high priest was still living at this time. (cf. Jud.20.28) You will notice that these five chapters begins with and ends with a statement that in those days there was no king in Israel.

*Jud.17.6 In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

...

*21.25 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

Remember that the reason this section is at the end is because of the connection it has in time to the Book of Ruth. Remember Rahab of Jericho? She will bear a son whose name is Boaz. Boaz might have grown up *in those days* when *there was no king in Israel* (Judges chs. 17-21), and married Ruth around the time of either the judge, Othniel, or when under Eglon's oppression.

It was a difficult time for the nation of Israel, that ended with the destruction and restoration of one of their tribes (Benjamin) on account of gross sin. Now we turn back to chapter 3 to continue a sequential reading of the Book of Judges.

### **Chapter 3**

**1 ¶ Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, test, try**

*to prove, Piel (intensive act.) infin. of the verb נִסָּה, nah-sah, tss. to tempt, to prove, to assay, to adventure, to try; Jud.2.11, Piel infin., I may prove; 3.1, 4, to prove; 6.39, Piel fut., let me prove.*

***even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan;***

***2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;***

By now most of us are all quite familiar with the idea that conflicts and contradictions, wars and oppositions test one's trust and obedience to the LORD. Israel could not know to what extent they trusted in the LORD if they were never tried with some difficulty. Yes, Israel's failure to obey the LORD by driving out the nations/Gentiles from the land of Canaan brought them trouble.

*Nu 33:55 But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.*

Now the children of Israel live in the results of their father's failure, which is all by design of the LORD. Those of the children of Israel that were not of age to fight in the days when Israel invaded the land of Canaan would need to learn for themselves, personally how to war. The LORD left the Gentiles in Canaan to prove them, to test them, to try them. And by so doing they would learn to war. Why was it necessary for them to learn war? To learn to trust in God *for themselves*.

***3 Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath.***

The Philistines dominated the southwest of Israel. The Canaanites, central Canaan, and the Sidonians and Hivites in the north.

***4 And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether***  
(the nations) (by their continued presence)

***they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.***

***5 And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites:***

***6 And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.***

**7 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.**

groves, אֲשֵׁרָה, or אֲשֵׁירָה, ash-shey-rah, a fem. noun always tss. grove; these are perhaps trees that were planted in behalf of some deity. It is *planted* and can be *cut down*.

*De 16:21 Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.*

*De 7:5 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.*

*Ex.34.11 Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.*

*12 Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:*

*13 But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:*

*14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:*

*15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and (by reason of this covenant) they (the nations would be the more encouraged to) go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods (in the LORD's land and among the LORD's people), and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;*

*16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.*

*17 Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.*

**8 ¶ Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia:**

*Mesopotamia*, the Hebrew אֲרָם, *Aram*, and perhaps referring to the an area located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, where Abraham's brethren settled at Haran. This we would call Syria.

***and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years.***

*and he sold them*, Qal fut. of the verb מָכַר, mah-kar, tss. to seel, to sell away.

Notice that the Israelites could never be like the Gentiles. They could be friends with the Gentiles. They could conduct business back and forth. They could intermarry. But no matter what Israel did their enemies were always their enemies. As soon as the Gentiles got the upper hand they would treat the Israelites cruelly. For eight years *Chushanrishathaim* ruled over the Israelites, AND over the Gentiles that were among them. But it is certain that Israel suffered the worst of this invading power.

***9 And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.***

*deliverer*, Hiphil (causative act.) part. of the verb יָשַׁע, yah-sha[g], to help, to save, to defend, to deliver, to avenge, to preserve, to bring salvation, to rescue. (Jud.2.16, which delivered them; 18, and delivered them; 3.9, a deliverer, who delivered them, 3.15, a deliverer; 3.31, and ... delivered; 6.14, and thou shalt save; 6.15, shall I save, 6.31, will ye save, 6.36, save, 6.37, thou wilt save; 7.2, hath saved, 7.7, will I save; 8.22, thou hast delivered us; 10.1, to defend, 10.12, and I delivered, 10.14, let them deliver; 12.2, ye delivered, 12.3, delivered; 13.5, to deliver; )

The **first judge** of Israel. The very next generation following Joshua and Calen. Othniel was nephew to Caleb. He was a valiant man. His name, as Cruden and Davidson define it, means *lion of God*, i.e., 'most powerful.'

Jos.15.16 *And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.*

17 *And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.*

And the LORD raised him up to be a judge for Israel, to deliver them from their enemies.

הָיָה (a *being* verb)

**10 And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel,**  
lighted

*and he judged, שָׁפַט, a verb tss. to judge, to rule, to defend, to plead, to contend.*

נָתַן

**and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushanrishathaim king of**  
proceeded gave

*war, מִלְחָמָה, mil-chah-mah, a fem. noun tss. war, battle, fight.*

**Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushanrishathaim.**  
strengthened

*prevailed, עָזַז, [g]ah-zaz, a verb tss. to strengthen, to prevail, to harden, to be impudent.*

**11 And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.**

*had rest, of the Qal fut. verb שָׁקַט, tss. to rest, to be idle, to be still, to be quiet, to be settled or appeased.*

עֵינַי

**12 ¶ And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD:**  
eyes

**and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel,**

*strengthened*, of the Piel (intensive act.) fut. verb קָיָם, tss. *to be sore, to prevail, to be strong, courageous, confirmed, established, stout, encouraged, hardened, strengthened, to fasten, retain.*

***because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.***

***13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and***  
(the LORD) (Eglon)

That's right. The LORD strengthened the enemy of His people by allowing other nations to form an alliance with Moab to fight against Israel.

Amalek used to be the chiefest of the Gentiles.

*Nu 24:20 And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.*

When Israel came out of Egypt the Amalekites came against Israel, unprovoked. (cf. Ex.17.7) For this the LORD promise that He would put away all remembrance of them from the when He had given Israel rest.

*Deu.25.17 Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;  
18 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.  
19 Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it.*

I'm not sure that this has been yet. But, whoever this people is the LORD will perform this against them.

***went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees.***

Jericho is called the *city of Palm trees*.

*De 34:3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.*

But the city as it was then known was utterly destroyed.

*Jos.6.24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.*

...

*26 And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it. (The city was not rebuilt again until 1Ki.16.34, by Hiel.)*

So Eglon took possession of an area near to Jerich and Gilgal and built a palace there.

**14 So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.**

The name Eglon means, as Robert Young defines it, *circle, round*, עֵגְלוֹ [g]ehy-gel. The adjective עָגֹל, gah-gōhl, is tss. *round*. As we shall see Eglon is quite *round*.

**15 But when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man *lefthanded*:**

Or, *shut* in his right hand.

*left handed*, the adj. אֶתֶר, it-tehr. The verb only once is in the OT, אֶתֶר, ah-tar, tss. *shut*; cf. Jud.3.15; 20.16.

The **second judge** of Israel, Ehud. Ehud, means *strong*. If Ehud was not one of the 600 men that survived the war which Israel had waged against Benjamin in chs.20, 21 (cf. Jud.20.47), then he is a son to one of those men.

After the destruction of the tribe of Benjamin in Jud.21.3, 6, and following the 66 years of history that are in this chapter the LORD raised up this one from among the tribe of Benjamin be judge over Israel.

מִנְחָה שְׁלַח

**and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.**

lit. by his hand extended an offering

שְׁלַח, tss. to send, stretch, put, put forth.

מִנְחָה, tss. *present, offering, meat offering, gift, oblation.*

So Israel sent by the hand of Ehud an offering of sorts to appease the king of Moab.

**16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.** (so about 18" long)

*dagger, בַּחֶרֶב, cheh-rev, a fem. noun tss. sword, tool, knife, dagger, mattocks (i.e. perhaps what we call a 'pick' or 'pick-ax'.*

*gird, the verb חָגַר, chah-gar, tss. to gird, to restrain, to put on, to appoint.*

*thigh, a fem. noun, יָרֵךְ, yah-rek, also tss. loins, thigh, body, side.*

**17 And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man.**

*fat, from the Hebrew adj. בָּרֵךְ יָא, bah-ree, also tss. firm, plenteous, fed, rank.*

**18 And when he had made an end to offer the present,**  
(Ehud) presenting the offering



to offer, קָרַב, qah-rav, also tss. to bring near, to be at hand, to draw near, to approach, to stand by, to be ready, to bring.

**he sent away the people that bare the present.**

(Ehud)

(those of his entourage)

that bare, the verb נָשָׂא, nah-sa, also tss. to spare, to accept, to swear, to lay, to forgive, to respect, to suffer, to pluck, to contain, to receive, to obtain, to lift up.

**19 But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal,**

(Ehud)

quarries, masc. pl. noun, פְּסִילִים, p<sup>e</sup>-see-leem, also tss. graven images, carved images. Probably referring to the places where graven images were made.

Ehud was evidently in a place that overlooked the quarries. It was here that the king employed so many in crafting gods of stone to be worshipped in the LORD's land and by the LORD's people. This view must have provoked Ehud all the more to carry out his purpose against the king of Moab. I.E.,

*2Pe 2:8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)*

**and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence.**

message (v.20)

(the king)

or word

secret, masc. noun, סֵתֶר, seh-ther, also tss. secret place, covering, disguise, hiding place, covert, backbiting; and so 'hidden.'

keep silence, is only in the Piel verb (intensive act.) and also tss. to hold your peace, to be stilled (Nu.13.30)

**And all that stood by him**                      **went out from him.**  
(the king)

**20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour,**  
(the king)                      (the king)                      cooling loft

*summer, מְקַרְהָה, m<sup>e</sup>-qeh-rah, a fem. noun only twice in the OT, this text, vss. 20, 24.*

*parlour, a fem. noun, עֵלְיָהּ, [g]ah-lee-yah, also tss. chamber, upper chamber, loft, the going up.*

**which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat.**                      word  
(Eglon)                      (to receive it)

**21 And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly:**

*thrust, of the verb תִּקַּע, tss. to pitch, to blow, to strike, to fasten.*

**22 And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.**

*haft, a masc. noun, נִצָּב, nitz-tzav, only this once in the OT.*

*fat, חֵלֶב, cheyh-lev, a masc. noun also tss. marrow, fatness, finest.*

*closed, סָגַר, sah-gar, also tss. to shut, to shut up, to inclose, to shut in, to shut out., etc.*

*dirt, פֶּרֶשׁ־דָּנָה, par-sh<sup>e</sup>-doh-nah, only this once in the OT, meaning 'dung, fundament.' See פֶּרֶשׁ, peh-resh, dung.*

*Dictionary – 1. a. excrement.*

**23 Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.**

bolted

*locked*, of the verb נָעַל, nah-[g]al, also tss. *to bolt, to shod, to inclose, to shut up.*

**24 When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer chamber.**

cooling loft

*covereth*, the verb סָכַן, sah-kak, also tss. *to defend, to hedge, to set, to join.*

**25 And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he opened not the**

refrained

confounded

confused

*tarried*, the verb חָיַל, cheel, or חוּל, chool, also tss. *to be pained, to be anguished, to travail, to be grieved, etc.*

*ashamed*, the verb בּוֹשׁ, bōsh, also tss. *to be confounded, to delay.*

*opened*, the verb פָּתַח, pah-thach, also tss. *to set forth, to draw out, to draw, to loose, to ungird, to go free; Jud.3.25 and opened (twice); 4.19, And she opened; 19.27, and opened.*

**doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened them: and, behold,**

                  אָדוֹן, ah-dōhn                   נָפַל  
*their*        *lord*                   *was fallen down*        *dead on the earth.*  
                  master

key, מִפְתָּח, maph-tehy-ach, a masc. noun t times in the OT and tss.  
key (2), opening (1); see Pv.8.6, the masc. noun מִפְתָּח, miph-tah-  
auch, tss. *the opening of* (my lips).

**26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries,  
during their lingering**

*tarried*, the verb מָהַר, also tss. *to linger, to delay, to stay*.

**and escaped unto Seirath.**  
got away

*escaped*, the verb מָלַט, mah-lat, also tss. *to be delivered, to get  
away. (Jud.3.26 (twice), 29)*

שׁוֹפָר

**27 And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the**

יָרַד

**mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the  
mount, and he before them.** descended

*Nu.10.9 And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth  
you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be  
remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your  
enemies.*

נָתַן

**28 And he said unto them, Follow after me: for the LORD hath delivered**  
given

*follow*, the verb רָדַף, also tss. *to pursue, to follow, to chase, to  
persecute, to put to flight. (Jud. 1.6, and they pursued; 3.28, follow;  
4.16, pursued; 4.22, pursued; 7.23, 25, and pursued; 8.4, het  
pursuing; 8.5, am pursuing; 8.12, And ... he pursued; 9.40, And ...  
chased him; 20.43, chased them)*

**your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him,**  
(antagonizing ones)

*your enemies, is a verb!*, אַיָּב, ah-yav, also tss. *foes*. (Jud.2.14 (twice),  
18; 3.28; 5.31; 8.34; 11.36; 16.23, 24)

**and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man**  
overtook נתן gave

*took*, the verb לָקַח, also tss. *to take, to catch*, and so meaning to  
overtake or capture.

*fords*, מַעְבְּרֹת, ma[g]-bah-rah, tss. *ford* (3), *passage* (5), and refers to  
a shallow place for crossing bodies of water.

**to pass over.**

**29 And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and  
all men of valour; and there escaped not a man.**

*slew*, נָחַח, nah-cah, a verb also tss. *to punish, to kill, to strike, to beat*,  
etc., vss.13, 19, 31.

*lusty*, שָׂמֵן, an adj. tss. *fat* (8), *lusty* (1), *plenteous* (1).

*valour*, יָלֵל, chah-yil, a masc. noun also tss. *wealth, activity, army*,  
*host, able, valiant, war, substance, virtuous, strength, power*.

**30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had  
rest fourscore years.**

*was subdued*, כָּנַע, kah-na[g], a verb also tss. *to humble, to bring  
under, to bring into subjection, to bring low, to bring down*. (Jud.3.30;  
4.23; 8.28; 11.33)

**31 ¶ And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel.**

a goad for an ox

*goad*, מַלְמָד, a masc. noun only this once in the OT. The English *goad* is also tss. from the Hebrew fem. pl. noun דָּרְבוֹנוֹת, dor-vōh-nōth (Ecc.12.11) and the masc. noun דָּרְבָן, dor-vahn (1Sa.13.21).

*delivered*, יָשַׁע, yah-sha[g], a verb tss. *to save, to defend, to avenge, to preserve, to rescue.*

The **third judge** of Israel, is named Shamgar, which Robert Young says means *cupbearer* or *fleer*.

Shamgar is mentioned one other time in Scripture. In Jud. 5.6, Deborah, also a judge of Israel, sang a victory song. In it she tells of the barrenness of Israel's main travel routes *in the days* preceding her, which are the days of Shamgar and Jael. (cf. Jud.5.6) Then Israel had to find alternative routes to travel in the land. Perhaps it was through the efforts of Shamgar there was some freedom to travel through the land without fear of the enemy, but Deborah in this song she states that she opened up those highways for Israel.

This chapter give an account of 146 years of history.

Mesopotamian oppression (v.8)	8 years
Othniel peace (v.11)	40
Moab's oppression (v.14)	18
Ehud's peace (v.30)	80
Shamgar (unknown)	---
Total	146 years

Note: Caleb was 85 when he went to battle against Hebron and took it, killing the three sons of Anak, Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai. (cf. Nu.13.22; Jos.14.10; 15.14; Jud.1.10)