

Judges, Sermon #10

Judges 3

We discovered last time that relationships affect faith – don't they?

The Israelites lived amongst the heathen – then they married into and then forsook God and worshipped idols

Israel is in dire trouble

I've entitled tonight's message "The First Judge of Israel"

Judges 3:8

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word

Judges 3:8-11

Let us pray

You may be seated

The First Judge of Israel

The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel – vs. 8

I would hate to have God mad at me, wouldn't you?

This is something that can still take place – be ye angry and sin not
Jesus angry – God pouring out His wrath

So, how does God deal with His anger toward his children? Chastisement

Chastisement was the reaction of God against Israel.

It can take many forms

God sold His people to an enemy – vs. 8

The word **sold** means to sell into slavery – hand over to someone else

Four times in the Book of Judges we're told that God "sold" His people to the enemy.

God surrendered His people over to these enemies for punishment and correction.

God does chastise us.

Hebrews 12:6, *"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth [whips] every son whom he receiveth."*

Sometimes, He chastises us by "selling us," giving us over to whatever we may be involved in.

Now, who was this king of Mesopotamia?

His name was Cushan Rishathaim (means "double wicked") – Cushan the double wicked – nickname – but it also describes the condition that Israel had plunged.

Israel had become doubly wicked.

They had forsaken the Lord and now served strange gods.

And so Cushan ruled over Israel for eight years

For eight years they lived in trouble and tribulation, misery and misfortune, distress and disaster, woe and wretchedness.

God was trying to turn His people around.

Life in the woodshed was getting old for Israel.

One thing about God – He does not tire in His discipline

Eight years of affliction, oppression, tribulation, taxation, desolation, and stagnation.

Eight years was enough.

FINALLY, they cry out to God but what a waste!

Eight wasted years of bondage!

How many of us have (wasted in a relationship that affected our faith?) made the same mistake of wasting away time, talent, and treasure in the bondage of sin?

Are we in the woodshed tonight because we have rejected the Lord or His Word in our life?

Have we forsaken God to follow something else? Money? People? Fame or popularity?

If we are a believer, we must realize the vanity of doing that and turn from our sin.

How easy is it for us to turn our eyes upon this or that and our heart/mind thinks upon it.

It becomes our goal – eventually our god.

How many of us have had a god outside of the true God?

Charles Spurgeon said that God never allows His people to sin successfully.

Their sin will either destroy them or it will invite the chastening hand of God.

If the history of Israel teaches the contemporary church anything, it's the obvious lesson that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Prov. 14:34)

What exalts a church – exalting Jesus Christ, exalting the Word of God

Have you ever sent the Lord an SOS from the pigpen?

God's people sent one to the Lord in vs. 9

They **cried** unto the Lord – they had forsaken Him, but now they are pleading with God

They used to cry to Baal and Ashtoreth, but now they cry to the Lord.

God brought trouble into their life to wake them up and they are crying out.

So, God raised up a deliverer – a judge, a savior named Othniel

Vs. 9

Othniel was a skillful, proven leader – 1:12

Othniel was a man of courage and faith.

The Spirit of the Lord came upon him and He became an instrument of God's grace.

Notice what Othniel does first (vs. 10) – he judged Israel and THEN he goes out to war.

He reproveth the people, dealing with their sin problem first and then goes out to battle.

He called the people back to the truth.

Sin needs to be conquered in our personal lives, our home, and the church first before
we can be effective in doing the Lord's work.

If we are going to be salty in the society, we must be salty in our life and in the church.

How can we stand against corruption and sin if we are personally defeated and
inconsistent ourselves?

God's salvation for the people came through Othniel

Othniel's name means "lion of God"

By blood and by marriage, Othniel belonged to a family noted for its courageous faith

and its willingness to face the enemy and depend on God for the victory – vs. 9e

He had a great example in Caleb who wholly followed the Lord.

What kind of person was Caleb? Man of faith

When God called Othniel, he was available for the Lord, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and empowered him for battle

Vs. 10a – and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him

This was the secret of Othniel's strength, as it was with Gideon (water pitchers and torches) and Samson; and the Spirit must be the source of the believer's power today.

“The Holy Spirit longs to reveal to us the deeper things of God.

He longs to love through us.

He longs to work through us.

Through the blessed Holy Spirit we may have strength for every duty, wisdom for every problem, comfort in every sorrow, and joy in His service.

Othniel not only rescued his nation from bondage, but also served his people as judge for forty years.

This meant that he exercised authority in managing the affairs of the nation, and it was his spiritual and civil leadership that brought rest to the land.

Never underestimate the good that one person can do who is led by the Spirit of God and obedient to the will of God.

1. The Spirit of the LORD came upon him (vs. 10).

This simply means that the presence, the power, and the assurance of God filled him.

Othniel brought peace to Israel for 40 years.

For an entire generation, God's people lived in peace.

They were able to rebuild their homes, grow and reap the harvest of their crops, and build a strong economy.

No longer did they fear the assault and abuse of their property or of their wives and children.

The presence of God's man brought a great sense of security to God's people.

The First Judge of Israel

Let us stand for closing invitation.

Did you know that at the moment of your salvation – that's when you trust in Jesus Christ – the blessed Holy Spirit, births, baptizes, and indwells you?

The power of God inside of us – YET

We must allow the Holy Spirit to control us and if we don't, we quench and grieve the Spirit of God

