



Sermon Notes

Journey Through Judges #3
Othniel
Judges 3:7-11

June 17, 2007
Tim Strickland

Judges 3:7-11 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.

Introduction:

a. We need a Hero

b. What is a Judge?

- a. Saviour/Deliverer & Leader (Judges 2:16-17)
 - To save Israel from oppression
 - To lead Israel to walk with God

c. Examples and Instruction

- a. These OT stories provide us with examples and instruction
 - 1 Cor. 10 esp note v6&11, referring to Moses but applicable to Judges

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1. The Cyclical Pattern of the Judges (2:11-19, 3:7-11)

1. Israel does evil in the sight of the Lord (3:7)
 - "Evil in the sight of the Lord"
 - *They forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.*
2. The anger of the Lord is kindled and He gives Israel into the hands of their enemies who oppress them (3:8)
 - The gracious discipline of God
 - *Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia...8 years*
3. Israel cries out to the Lord (3:9a)
 - Not necessarily repentance
 - *the people of Israel cried out to the Lord*
4. The Lord hears them and sends a judge to save them (3:9b)
 - The Lord raises up a judge
 - *...the Lord raised up a deliverer...who saved them, Othniel, the son of Kenaz...*
5. The Spirit of the Lord is on the judge, who leads them to victory (3:10)
 - The Lord empowers a judge through His Spirit
 - *The Spirit of the Lord was upon him*
 - *And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim*
6. There is rest in the land (3:11a)
 - The land has rest, but not necessarily the people
 - *So the land had rest forty years.*
7. The judge dies and the cycle begins again (3:11b)
 - *Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.*

Note: Not all steps in the cycle are found in every judge story

2. Othniel (3:7-11)

At first glance...few details are given...not much of a story!

- a. Background Part 1 - "Caleb's younger brother" (brother/kinsman)

Caleb's Story:

- Spying out the land - Numbers 13:1-14:38, 14:24
- Caleb and Joshua were the only members of their generation to enter Canaan - Numbers 26:64-65
- A brave warrior - Joshua 14:6-15, 15:13-14
 - Fighting giants at age 85!
 - Josh. 14:12 - *"It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the Lord said"*
- Key Description: *"he wholly followed the Lord, the God of Israel"* - Joshua 14:14, see also Numbers 14:24

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b. Background Part 2 – Othniel

- A Kenizzite
- Part of the generation who knew the Lord and his works
- A brave warrior – Joshua 15:15-17/Judges 1:11-13
- A wise wife, Achsah – Joshua 15:18-19/Judges 1:14-15

c. Othniel is a model judge

- The shortest story of the 'major' judges
 - No background or plot details
 - The silence speaks volumes
- Othniel led Israel to victory in the power of the Holy Spirit
 - *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.* (10)

3. Learning from the story of Othniel

a. God is Sovereign and complete control of history

- *"...he sold them into the hand of Cushan..."*
- *"The Lord raised up a deliverer..."*
- *"The Spirit of the Lord was upon him..."*
- *"the Lord gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand."*

b. The impact of a godly family

- Caleb, a godly father-figure
- Achsah, a godly wife

c. Without the Lord we can do nothing

- Othniel's strength was from the Lord, by His Spirit

d. Be ready to stand up and fight spiritual battles in the name of the Lord

- Othniel – Judges 1:11-13, 3:11-15
- Ephesians 6:10-13

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Journey Through Judges #11
Abimelech: Gideon's Wicked Son
Judges 9:1-57

Our Response

1. Fathers: Are you a Caleb or an Othniel in your family? Pray that the Lord would give you the strength to be a godly leader of your family.

2. Walk in the Spirit, who is given to all believers today.

Ephesians 5:18b "...be filled with the Spirit"

3. Be ready to stand up and fight the spiritual battles that you will encounter, knowing that God is in complete control and His power is at work in you.

Ephesians 6:10-13 ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

Questions for Application

1. Do you know a family who has a Caleb or an Othniel (see Num. 14:24, Josh. 14:24)? How does that godly leadership impact that family?
2. Describe the cyclical pattern of the judges.
3. Do you ever feel like events in our world are out of control? What does the cyclical pattern of the judges teach you about God's sovereign control?
4. What spiritual battles are you facing? How does the power of the Holy Spirit impact your ability and attitude to fight those battles? Is there something(s) you need to do to obey God but are not doing (perhaps due to lack of courage, lack of faith, etc...). Encourage one another in your group.
5. Pray together as a group for faith in God's strength to fight the spiritual battles we all face, and for the Spirit's working in our church as we study Judges together.

Questions, Comments? - inthebeginning@look.ca

If you have questions or comments about today's message, please drop me an email to the address above. Thanks,

Tim



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