

**BAND OF BROTHERS**  
**WHEN**  
**JUDGES RULED**  
**AND**  
**SIN REIGNED**  
**LIFE LESSONS FROM**  
**THE BOOK OF JUDGES**

**WEEK 3 HOMEWORK**

- Read Judges 4-5  
These two chapters feature the only female judge mentioned in the entire book. And there is another woman who plays a significant role in God's deliverance of the people of Israel from the oppression of their enemies.
  - According to verses 3, what caused the people to call out to God for help?
  - Go back and look at Judges 1:19. What was the one thing the tribe of Judah failed to do? What does it have in common with verse 3 of chapter 4?
  - Take a few minutes to read the article by Justin Estrada called "Chariots of Iron." It is located in the back of your notebook.
  - According to Judges 4:6-7, what was Barak supposed to have done that he had failed to do?
  - According to verses 8-9, what was Barak's response? Why do you think he gave this answer? What could have been his motivation?
  - What was Deborah's response to Barak and why is it significant?

- Read Judges 4:12-13. In what ways do you see God at work in this scene? How did He fulfill the promise God had made through Deborah and recorded in verses 6 and 14?
  
- Read Judges 4:17-21. Who did God use to destroy Sisera, the commander of the Canaanite troops? Why is this significant?
  - How is this a fulfillment of Deborah's statement made back in verse 9?
  
  - What are some ways you have seen God use women to accomplish His will?
  
  - Neither Deborah or Jael were warriors. One was a prophetess and the other, a shepherdess. So, why is it important that God defeated the enemies of Israel through these two women?

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WEEK 3: Judges 3:7-31

**Sin, Suffering, Sorrow, Salvation:** Let the Cycle Begin

“They forgot the LORD their God...”

–Judges 3:7

- **Israel Adopts A Good Neighbor Strategy**

*<sup>5</sup> So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. <sup>6</sup> And their daughters they took to themselves for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.*  
– Judges 3:5-6 ESV

-Israel Assimilated Into the Culture

- familial alliances
- political alliances
- common worship
- common morals

What God had said:

*“You shall not make idols for yourselves or erect an image or pillar, and you shall not set up a figured stone in your land to bow down to it, for I am the LORD your God...But if you will not listen to me and will not do all these commandments, <sup>15</sup> if you spurn my statutes, and if your soul abhors my rules, so that you will not do all my commandments, but break my covenant, <sup>16</sup> then I will do this to you...” – Leviticus 26 ESV*

“God was to be obeyed simply because he was God...That God is to be revered, not because of what he can do to us, but for who he is in himself. If we wonder why we should obey God, in the last resort the answer is “I AM”. To know God is to know that our obedience is due to him.” – CS Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*

- **Mercifully, God’s covenantal faithfulness is not dependent upon his people.**
  - God’s covenant with Israel is unilateral
  - God never changes
  - God always keeps his promises

Israel does lose track and begins the cycle of **Sin, Suffering, Sorrow, and Salvation**

## The Cycle of Sin in the Book of Judges



- **The Cycle Begins: Sin (aka the abandonment of God)**

*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. – Judges 3:7*

- Conflict: God’s Standard vs Our Standard
  - we **CAN’T** look at the world for God’s standards
  - we **CAN** look at God’s revealed Word
- Forgot (*šākah*) – to forget, to disregard
  - By doing what is right in our own eyes
  - By following culture
  - Israel’s sin is the abandonment of God

“They exchanged the living God for the figments of the depraved human imagination”  
– Daniel Block

- We Are Called to Remember
  - Remembering is a community event, family event, personal event
  - God gave us an ordinance (the Lord's Supper) and a people (the Church) to help us remember
  - "do this in remembrance of me" – Luke 22

- **The Result: Suffering and Sorrow**

*"Therefore the **anger** of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and **he sold them...**"*  
 – Judges 3:8a

- They reaped what they sowed
  - Enslavement to the people they desired to be like
  - Fulfilment of Leviticus 26, inviting the Lord's discipline

*"God never allows his people to sin successfully. Their sin will either destroy them or it will invite the chastening hand of God." – Charles Spurgeon*

- "to give" (*nātan*) "to sell" (*mākar*)
  - Commercial expressions of transferring ownership, like cattle
  - The Israelites acted like slaves so God sold them according to their sin

- The Lord's Discipline vs Suffering

Discipline is meant to lovingly correct by yielding repentance and proper worship and has as its root unbelief and disobedience

Suffering is a result of the Fall may be used for many purposes for you and/or others and does not have at its root unbelief or disobedience

- **Cried Out: Sorrow**

- God's people were in anguish, crying out to the one they hoped would bring deliverance
- God's design and desire is for his people to flourish
  - right way
  - right relationship
  - right God
- God's judgment was his kindness
  - They had to be physically enslaved to know they were spiritually enslaved
  - They were reminded where their help comes from – Psalm 121

## - Repentance?

- Deliverance, revival, redemption come when we seek our rescue from God instead of ourselves

*"10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death." – 2 Corinthians 7:10*

- God's character is revealed
  - Covenant keeper
  - Rich in mercy

## • Salvation

-Like the exodus, God remembers his promise to the forefathers and mercifully delivers if only that they would cry out to him

*"How rich the mercy of God that no matter how far you've gone, whatever you've done, God will forgive you today if you cry out to him for mercy and forgiveness" – David Guzik*

-The First Two Judges

- Both from good stock
- One an expected leader, one unexpected
- Both **raised up by God**

-Othniel – The Ideal Man from the Ideal Clan

- Judahite
- Faithful Family
- Proven Military Leader (Judges 1)

*"The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel." Judges 3:10*

- God's Prerequisites for a Deliverer

- Raised up **by Yahweh**
- Empowered **by Yahweh**

- **Spirit of the LORD** Empowerment

- Was not** dependent upon the judge's faithfulness
- Was** according to God's mercy and divine will

*“and **the LORD gave** Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand.” – Judges 3:10*  
-Victory is always the LORD’s (not the man)

*“why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?” - Acts 3:12*

*“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit.’ says the Lord of hosts” – Zechariah 4:6*

- **Silence**

*“<sup>11</sup> So the land had rest forty years.” Judges 3:11*

-The Land had Rest for a generation

[Israel learns] “if Yahweh can deliver Israel from this emperor he can rescue them from any foe”  
– Daniel Block

-the land had rest, not the people during the life of the Spirit-empowered judge  
-they experienced temporary salvation from outward oppression, not spiritual rest from faithfulness

- **Ehud** (Same song, second dance)
  - like the other judges, a nobody

- **Sin, Suffering**

- Victory doesn’t last forever
  - Relying on past faithfulness/deliverance leads to future defeat
  - The Past is for our encouragement to press on in the faith

*“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. He gathered to himself the Ammonites and the Amalekites, and went and defeated Israel. And they took possession of **the city of palms**. And the people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab **eighteen years**. – Judges 3:12-14*

- Sin always brings bondage

-How did it come to this? Who’s to blame?

- Priests** (Leviticus 10)
- Parents** (and grandparents!) (Deuteronomy 6, Proverbs 22)
  - pass on a living and active faith

- **Sorrow and Salvation**

*“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.**” – Judges 3:15*

-God uses the weak and unassuming to shame the strong and to glorify himself

*“For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But **God chose** what is **foolish** in the world to **shame** the wise; **God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong**; 28 **God chose** what is **low and despised** in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, **boast in the Lord.**” – 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 ESV*

-Shame the strong

-Glorify Himself

-Encourage the people to Faithfulness

-A Message from God!

*“And Ehud said, “I have a message from God for you.” – Judges 3:20*

-If you oppress God’s people you will pay the price

-God’s Word

-Creates from nothing

-Destroys on command

-Gives life

-Takes Life

-Provides

-Reveals Truth

-God’s final message: Death

- All men die

- All men face judgment (Hebrews 9:27)

- All men will KNOW that God is king and judge

*“the final message from God is death, many preceding messages come from his Word and the pulpit (also his word), we should ‘set our houses in order...[to] hear the other messengers of God before he sends this last most potent one, from which ye cannot turn away’” – C.H. Spurgeon, David Guzik*

– When you hear God’s Word you are hearing a message for you, that you should seek him and turn your life in his direction

-Follow Me

*“28 And he said to them, ‘**Follow after me**, for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand.’” – Judges 3:28*

- True leaders say “follow me because I follow God”

- Spiritual leaders are invaluable
- Wisely follow those who accurately and maturely follow Jesus
- Paul (Philippians 3, 2 Thessalonians 3, 1 Corinthians 2)

-Peace cannot last without steadfast, intergenerational faithfulness to God

- Othniel and Ehud have the longest periods of peace in the land and only last as long as the judge; Judges 3:11,30
- We enjoy rest and peace with God through our great and perfect deliverer, Jesus Christ who is alive today

A Time of Remembrance: The LORD’S Supper

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- Specifically, how do you forget the LORD? And how this day/week/year can we remember what the LORD has done for us and keep ourselves from forgetting?
- In what ways do you feel inadequate for the ministry God has raised you up and empowered you for? Who can you follow that is following Jesus well?
- Do you consciously enjoy the peace and rest of having been saved from God and freed from bondage to idols? If so or not, why?