

Lesson 3: Judges 2:6-3:31

Death of Joshua, Pagan Nations remaining in the Land, Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar

Chapter 1 began with the death of Joshua. In these pages the text backtracks a bit in order to explain the reason why, after Joshua's death, the future generations "forgot YHWH" and turned to other gods. These new generations had not experienced the miracles in the desert that their fathers had talked about. Chapter 3 begins by telling us that they did not know *war* either. This generation had not fought the wars that allowed them to claim Canaan as their own. The enemies of Israel served two of the Lord's purposes; they taught this generation about war and also served as a way to punish them for forgetting the Covenant.

As you continue to read the book of judges, look for a pattern of **sin, slavery, repentance and salvation**.

1. Read Judges 2:6-12 and footnotes.

**What evidence do we have that Joshua served as a good leader to the people of Israel?
What happened after his death? (Be specific.)**

2. Read Judges 2:13-17 and footnotes.

Who are the *Astartes* in verse 13?

What were the consequences to the Chosen People for falling away from covenant promises?

3. Read Judges 2:17-23.

Why does the text say that the Lord chose judges for His people?

What will the relationship between Israel and those nations that had not yet been conquered become?

4. Reflection. These events happened a generation (or two), after the Exodus.

Why did this generation forget their Covenant promises?

What is the importance of both political wisdom *and* moral character for a nation's leaders?

5. Read Judges 3:1-6 and footnotes.

Share with your group any information you find there that is helpful.

How is the Lord using the other nations to "test" Israel?

Who are the enemies of Israel?

6. Read Deuteronomy 7: 2-4 below. This was the word of the Lord given to Moses *before* they had reached the Promised Land.

What warning did the Lord give Moses and Israel?

What danger is there in these marriages?

Was this a racial issue or a religious one?

What role does a wife and mother have when it comes to family celebrations, rituals and religious practices?

Deuteronomy 7:2-4 and when the LORD, your God, gives them over to you and you defeat them, you shall put them under the ban. Make no covenant with them and do not be gracious to them. ³You shall not intermarry with them, neither giving your daughters to their sons nor taking their daughters for your sons. ⁴For they would turn your sons from following me to serving other gods, and then the anger of the LORD would flare up against you and he would quickly destroy you.

7. Read Judges 3:7-11.

Who is Othniel? How does the text describe him; by what titles?

8. By what power or authority does Othniel act and judge?

What is the meaning of verse 11?

9. Read Judges 3:12-30 and footnotes. Look for the pattern of sin, slavery, repentance and salvation in this story.

How long were the Israelites enslaved or subjects of Moab this time?

Who is Ehud? To which tribe does he belong?

What is significant about being “left-handed” in this story?

How were the Moabites defeated?

10. Read Judges 3:31. Who was Shamgar?