

Judges 3:7-31

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[0 : 00] Judges chapter 3 is where we're at. We've made it up to the 7th verse. So we're in Judges 3, starting in verse 7. And we'll go to the end of the 3rd chapter, which gets us to verse 31.

So Judges 3, verses 7-31. We're actually getting into the body of the book of Judges this evening. Last couple of times we've been together, we've introduced the book of Judges.

Actually, it's been the last three times we've come together. We've looked at it by way of introduction. Because the book of Judges essentially has two introductions to it. The first one covering the span of the first chapter into the second chapter.

And then a few verses into the second chapter into the third chapter. It's kind of a double introduction. It introduces itself kind of historically where they were at after Joshua died.

And the division of the land. And it kind of lets you know where they end up. And then the second introduction is a little bit more specific. It kind of tells you how they got there.

[1 : 03] Not necessarily what they did. The first introduction tells us what they did. They compromised with the people around them. They began to associate with the people around them. They failed to drive them out.

They decided not to drive them out. So they started doing a lot of things. And here are all the things that led them to the position they were in at the end of the book of Judges. And then the second introduction, which covers the bulk of the second chapter and into the third chapter, kind of shows us what they were doing with God because of that.

Because our actions are always a result of our relationship. Right? So the things we do have a theological reason. So our relationship with our Creator, our relationship with the Lord God Almighty, is what determines ultimately our actions or the way we respond.

Or even the things we don't do. The things that we should do that we don't do. Or the things that we should not do that we actually do. Those are not just determined by choice. Now, sure, we have a choice in the matter.

We make a choice. But it ultimately rests upon this one choice of how we're going to foster or mature or grow our relationship with the Lord our God. And when that relationship is neglected, then we've kind of lost all authority over our choices because we will revert naturally back to the natural man, the sinful man.

[2 : 30] And this is why Paul would even state in writing in the New Testament, that I die daily, you know, I crucify the flesh. Because he understood that he needed daily to be born again.

He needed daily to renew his walk with the Lord, his Savior. He needed to be in Christ each and every day. Because if we neglect that relationship, that theological relationship, then we will revert back to our natural decision process, our natural way of acting.

And we will begin to do things that are wrong. So sin is a root problem with the relationship issue. Sins, the actions we take, are the fruit of that root problem.

Right? And those are really essential to our whole understanding of Scripture. But before we get any further, let's go ahead and pray. Lord, we thank you so much just for allowing us to gather together. Lord, we thank you for the great blessing of the midweek service, that we can be encouraged, we can be reminded of what it is that you're doing among us.

And Lord, you're called upon us. Lord, the way you desire to move through us. And Lord, we pray that you would help us to understand your word this evening. God, we pray that it would speak to us with clarity and with truth.

[3 : 48] Lord, we pray as we open up the pages of Scripture, Lord, that it would show us who you are. And it would draw us closer to you for your glory and your honor and yours alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. Judges chapter 3, starting in verse 7. And we'll read down to the end of the chapter again. We are now moving into the center or the core of the book.

We're no longer introducing it. Now we're going to see how these things play out. It says, The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. And forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and Asherah.

Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. So he sold them into the hands of Cushan Rishathim, king of Mesopotamia. And the sons of Israel served Cushan Rishathim eight years.

When the sons of Israel cried to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel to deliver them. Othniel, the son of Canaz, Caleb's younger brother.

[4 : 51] The spirit of the Lord came upon him and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the Lord gave Cushan Rishathim, king of Mesopotamia, into his hand.

So that he prevailed over Cushan Rishathim. Then this land had rest forty years. And Othniel, the son of Canaz, died. Now the sons of Israel did evil, or the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.

So the Lord strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel. Because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord. And he gathered to himself the sons of Ammon and Amalek.

And he went and defeated Israel, and they possessed the city of the palm trees. The sons of Israel served Eglon, the king of Moab, eighteen years. But when the sons of Israel cried to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud, the son of Gerar, the Benjamite, a left-handed man.

And the sons of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon, the king of Moab. Ehud made himself a sword, which had two edges, a cubit in length. And he bound it on his right thigh under his cloak.

[5 : 58] He presented the tribute to Eglon, king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. It came about when he had finished presenting the tribute that he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. But he himself turned back from the idols, which were at Gilgal, and said, I have a secret message for you, O king.

And he said, Keep silence. And all who attended him left him. Ehud came to him while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud said, I have a message from God for you.

And he arose from his seat. Ehud stretched out his left hand and took the sword from his right thigh and thrust it into his belly. And the handle also went in after the blade.

And the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly. And the refuse came out. Verse 23. Then Ehud went out into the vestibule and shut the doors of the roof chamber behind him and locked them.

When he had gone out, his servants came and looked. And behold, the doors of the roof chamber were locked. And they said, He is only relieving himself from the cool room. And they waited until they became anxious. But behold, he did not open the doors of the roof chamber.

[7 : 01] Therefore, they took the key and opened them. And behold, their master had fallen to the floor dead. Now he had escaped while they were delaying. And he passed by the idols and escaped to Sirah. He came about when he had arrived that he blew the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim.

And the sons of Israel went down with him from the hill country. And he was in front of them. And he said to them, Pursue them. For the Lord has given your enemies, the Moabites, into your hands. So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan opposite Moab.

And they did not allow anyone to cross. And they struck down at that time about 10,000 Moabites, all robust and valiant men, and no one escaped.

So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land was undisturbed for 80 years. After him came Shamgar, the son of Anath, who struck down 600 Philistines with an ox goad.

And he also saved Israel. Judges 3, verses 7 through 31. The book of Judges is fairly raw. I mean, it's just, it hits you in all its authenticity and its realness.

[8 : 07] And it just reminds us at each turn and each story and each account, really, what's going on, the deplorable condition of God's people. They were to be his instrument of judgment upon the nations in the land of Canaan because of their sins.

And yet, because of their revolt and because of their, really, just disobedience to do everything God had told them to do. They find themselves in these conditions in which they are in desperate need of someone.

And God raises them up, but it doesn't hold any punches and tells us everything that's going on. And it's easy to kind of get lost in the accounts and the stories. Like, he had a left-handed man with the short sword or Shamgar with the ox goad and all these wonderful things which we were reading.

And we will come upon them and we'll see them over and over again kind of being replayed as God raises up judges to deliver his people. The word judge, there's either a deliverer or some see it as savior.

As someone once said, the composite of all of these judges really find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ. And I think that's a true statement. Not that he's a warrior running around with the left hand and a sword upon his right thigh.

[9 : 16] Not that he's using an ox goad. But principles that we can see and what God does through these people help us to understand what we have in our great deliverer with a capital D who is Jesus Christ.

And we're going to see that kind of this morning or this afternoon as we kind of look at the beginning of this. Because this starts the cycle. And we'll see some accounts have very little detail like Shamgar there with the ox goad.

We'll see other accounts that are very detailed like the next two chapters are dedicated to really one deliverance. And then we'll see stories like Samson which take up a lot of time and a lot of details.

But each one will see what God is doing with his people and how he is setting them free. So I want you to see this evening God's answer to man's problem. And it would come with the rise of the judges.

God's answer to man's problem. And it comes with the rise or the appearance of the judges or the deliverers. Now, we need to understand and we've looked at this by way of introduction that God is in absolute complete control through all these circumstances, through all of the situations.

[10 : 26] Never once does he lose control. Never once is he caught off guard. Never once are things really attributed to being his problem though we do see that he is in control. As man rebels and man revolts, God chastises and disciplines.

It says he sold them into slavery or he gave them into the hand of this king or he rose up Eglon, the king of Moab, to come and to defeat them. It is always God who is in control of even the good and the bad, right?

But it is man's problem that gets them in that position of bad. So even though it is God who raises up the ones who would discipline his people, we don't ever need to lose fact of the reality that it is his people's choice or his people's disobedience which got them to that place.

That he would not have raised up or sold into slavery or caused someone to capture them if they had been faithful to his covenant. And while he is in control of all circumstances, never once do we forget the sovereignty of God throughout the book of Judges.

Because over and over and over again it reminds us that everything that comes upon them, the captivity, the bad, the pain, and even the deliverance are all attributed to the Lord God doing his work.

[11 : 45] But it is man's rebellion and man's sin and man's choices which bring them to this place. And God's answer to man's problem is to bring about a deliverer.

It's always found in a person. And we don't want to forget that. And this, again, I think helps us to understand the consistency of scripture. We should be reminded of this because the Bible is not just a multitude of stories saying a whole bunch of different things.

It is one great story saying the same thing over and over and over again in different genres and in different manners and through different periods of history and in different accounts of God's interactions with man.

But God's answer to man's problem always centers around the raising up of a man, raising up a deliverer. And the ultimate, the grand narrative is, is he is pointing us to the hope of Christ in which the Old Testament will end with.

He is pointing us to what Malachi crawls out, that there is one who is coming. And he is pointing us to that one being revealed to us in the pages of the New Testament.

[12 : 57] When we open up the New Testament and we meet Jesus Christ, the great deliverer introduced for us in the book of Matthew. And if you remember, Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience because it is the Jewish people who have had this anticipation that has been building for centuries of this great deliverer that will be raised up.

Even here in what we've read in Judges 3, verses 7 through 31, we see the sounding of the shofar or the trumpet, the blowing of the horn.

And it is this cry of battle. And there is this anticipation built into the Jewish nation and God's people that he would raise up one that would sound the trumpet of deliverance.

We see it in the book of Isaiah. We see it in all of the major prophets and even the minor prophets. And it finds its portrait here. Think about it. When God responds to man's problem initially, Genesis 1 through 11 dictate for us every problem of man.

And when God is going to respond to man's problem, every problem of man is introduced for us in the first 11 chapters of the Bible. God's response to man's problem is found in Genesis chapter 12.

[14 : 12] In Genesis chapter 12, God calls a man. He called Abram out of the land of the Ur of the Chaldeans, right? So God's response to man's problem starts with the raising up of a man.

Now that man would become a nation. That nation would become a billboard to a watching world of the holiness of God. Or what's supposed to be. And from that nation ultimately would come a king. And that king would be David.

And that promise to David that one would set up on his throne eternally. And from that lineage would come the man, Jesus Christ. Over and over and over again we have this repetition.

When God's people get in trouble and they're in the land of Egypt. And they're now being enslaved against their wills and against their desires. And God responds to man's problem of slavery. He calls Moses, right?

He raises up a man. When Moses passes off the scene and now they need to go into the land of promise. He calls Joshua. He has a man. And there's always this consistency throughout scripture.

[15 : 10] God's answer to man's problem is him calling and raising up a deliverer. And we see it here being played out for us. And it's going to be played out over and over again.

And I think at times we get so enraptured in the story. Like we want to know more about how was he able to go in there. And he's got this left hand and this really cool sword.

And he does all this thing. And we can split atoms all we want to and talk about, you know, does it mean that the refuge came out? Did he went out his back with it? I mean, why is there such a clear depiction of what he did?

And what about this ox gold and all this stuff? But let's never separate the reality, the spiritual aspect of God responding to man's problem by raising up judges.

And we see this, first and foremost, the desperate condition that was before them. When God raised up a judge, he was raising up a judge that would go straight into people in a desperate condition.

[16 : 11] It tells us in verse 7, The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and forgot the Lord God and served the Baals and the Asherahs. We find down there in verse 12, Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.

Over and over and over again. We have no such introduction with Shemgar because it's just really one verse. But we find over and over and over again that the sons of Israel did what was evil or what was wicked.

And really there is no repentance because even when they cry out, they don't cry out in repentance. They do not change direction. They cry out in misery, right? And we understand this.

But what we need to comprehend is that God is raising up a judge and he is sending the judge to people in a desperate condition. Because in their desperation, they have forgotten the Lord their God.

They have walked away from him. They have neglected their relationship to him. And because of that, they are now enraptured or not enraptured. They are entrapped by sin and misery.

[17 : 11] And God has given them over essentially to those who would rule over them. Those that they were supposed to rule over are now ruling over them. Because of their rebellion, God sold them into slavery.

God raised up kings who would rule over them. And really they are just a picture of desperation. And these are the ones that God is sending the judge to. Now stay with me.

Because remember, when we read the book of Judges, we are just not reading the history of God's people that spans a time of about 400 years. We are essentially reading the history of man.

Because this is not something that was just limited to a time between Joshua and the raising up of the kingdom of Saul. This is not just something that was confined between the distribution of the inheritance and the raising up of a king by Samuel's anointing of the individual named Saul.

This is so much more than that. This is a picture of man's condition and how God responds to man's problem. And what we see is that when God raises up this deliverer, this judge, this ruler, this savior.

[18 : 19] Now none of them ever rule politically over the entire nation. They may have a little bit of a rule locally over a certain area. We'll see that. Gideon ends up ruling over a little certain area.

But none of them rule over the entire nation. God had not called them to be priests. God had not called them to be king. Because they were living in a theocratic nation, right? God was to be their king.

He was raising up deliverers. And each time he raised one up, he sent them to a desperate people. Because their choices and their rebellion and their compromises have got them to a place of desperation.

And he is sending them to people who are enslaved. And look at the very first one. If we look at this, it says that he had sold them into the hands of Kushan Rishathim.

Now Rishathim means doubly wicked. So essentially his name is the doubly wicked Kushan. He is just doubly wicked. We don't know if this is his actual name.

[19 : 20] Or if this is how people refer to him. But Kushan Rishathim, the doubly wicked one, is just a mild picture of who they were enslaved to.

Not just someone lording or ruling over them. But rather a doubly wicked one who was ruling them. And it gives us kind of a snapshot of the condition to which Othniel was being raised to go to.

And we understand here that now they cry out to the Lord God. And the Lord raises up a deliverer. Now pay attention to this because this is important. What we understand is that when man makes the choice to sin and to rebel.

When man makes the choice to disobey or to walk in half obedience. When man begins to compromise in his relationship with the Lord his God. And therefore gets himself in a position of desperation.

To a place where he comes to his end. A lot of times that desperation is a direct result of God's activity in his life. Because God raised up Kushan Rishathim to rule over them. And as God raised up Kushan Rishathim, the doubly wicked one, to rule over them.

[20 : 25] He finally got his people to a place of desperation. And when his people come to a place of desperation, they cry out to him. They don't cry out in repentance. This has no meaning of repentance.

They cry out in desperation. And this is the glory and the wonder of it all. When God's people come to the place where it's no longer in their control. When they come to the place that that which rules over them is greater than them.

And they have to cry out to him in desperation. God responds. And God has a deliverer for that moment. We don't read in the book of Judges that God sends a deliverer to people who have it all together.

We read throughout the book of Judges that God sends a deliverer to people who are in a place of misery and desperation. Which shows us that sometimes. Let's not say sometimes.

Let's say all times. God is over our disturbances and our desparations.

[21 : 28] And in his loving, omnipotent, omniscient power, he allows those circumstances that bring us to a place of desperate cries.

So that he can meet us in our ugliest of moments. Because he doesn't allow us to live as good people who have it all together.

He wants us to come to him and cry out to them as those who realize it's out of our control and we need someone greater than us. I've never seen anyone searching for a savior who thought they could do it on their own.

And when God sovereignly allows those circumstances which bring us to a place where we are no longer in control and we can no longer do it.

The wonder and the beauty of the gospel is this. It is there that God wants to send the deliverer to. There's no place so desperate in our life that he won't come meet us.

[22 : 33] There's no misery so awful that he won't come right into it. There's no choices that we make that get us to a place. This is a direct result of the people's choice, right?

There's no choices that we make that get us to a place of desperation that he cannot meet. That he cannot respond to.

Or even that he will not respond to. If the book of Judges teaches us anything, it is the reality that God is not scared and God is not unable to respond to our ugly problems.

Even the problems we create. As he would say to the prophets, is my arm too short to save?

And the answer to that is no. Because when he gets man to a place of desperation, that's exactly the place he longs to send the deliverer.

[23 : 35] This is why the New Testament reminds us that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. In our ugliest of moments, in our most desperate moments, in the moments that were a direct result of our own choices, and a direct result of our own rebellion, when we forgot the Lord our God, when we chose to serve the false gods of self, or the world, or fame, or money, or whatever it is, when we choose to do things our own way, that is the very place God sends the deliverer to.

Now, I love that. And the reason I love that is because that's what we need to know. We need to understand the reality. We don't get better, and then the deliverer comes.

We don't get it all together, and then the Savior shows up. You know, we don't clean up, and then he'll show up. No. It's when we're nasty, when we're ugly, when we're in that muck, in the mire of our choices.

It's when we're desperate, and all we can do is cry. That's when he shows up. They didn't pull themselves up by their bootstraps, and get it together, and then God finally said, okay, I'll meet you halfway.

God doesn't meet anyone halfway, because our desperation gives him the greatest glory. And our unbearable moments show him the greatest warrior, because then he raises up a deliverer.

[25 : 12] The desperate condition before them. Jesus came to us. Now, he came to the world in a desperate condition, but the reality is, is he comes to us individually, as we're sitting in a desperate condition.

He didn't come to us when we have it all together. He doesn't come to us. Now, is he there when we have it all together? Yes. But we realize that it's our desperate moments that bring us to cry out.

And we may not even be crying out in repentance. We're just crying out in pain. It is there that God responds, and he sends to deliver, too. The second thing we notice about God's answer to man's problem is not just the desperate condition before them.

The second thing we notice is the dependence upon God by them. Both the people and the deliverer he raises up are entirely dependent upon the Lord, their God.

It's amazing that the people wanted to worship the other gods as long as things were going well, but as soon as they did not go well, they cried out to the one God that they knew had the authority and the power to do something.

[26 : 28] That man is content with serving the God of self or the God of pleasure, the God of the moment, until things get to the place of desperation that they realize that this God whom they have served so long is no longer meeting the need, so they cry out to one who is over it all.

And we see they cry out, so the Lord raises up. Never forget this, that it is always God who raises up the deliverer.

Nobody votes for them. Nobody casts a ballot. Nobody is picked. Throughout the book of Judges, it is God who raises up the deliverer.

Now we find in the story of Othniel, one that we've already met a couple of times. We met him in the book of Joshua. We met him in the first chapter of the book of Judges. You remember Othniel? He was the warrior who was given Caleb's daughter as his bride because he went and captured a city.

So he's got a good lineage. Someone said that he's of the right lineage because Othniel is from the tribe of Judah. So we start with the deliverer from the tribe of Judah. By the way, Othniel's name means lion, right?

[27 : 36] So he is literally a lion from the tribe of Judah. So we see here he is a strong lion, which is what his name means, from the tribe of Judah. He's also got the right family unit that he's a part of because he's a part of Caleb's family.

Caleb was one of the spies who never denied it, right? It was Caleb and Joshua. So he's got the right family. He's got the right lineage. And he comes to us. Othniel is the standard of judges, by the way.

We're introducing him first, being from the tribe of Judah because Judah is always first in Scripture because there will be a lion from the tribe of Judah named Jesus Christ who will be prominent. But we're introducing him first because he is the standard by which every other judge will be judged.

Othniel comes to us as the perfect deliverer in the book of Judges. Not the perfect deliverer entirely, but the perfect deliverer in the book of Judges. Bible commentators have stated that we don't find Othniel doing anything crazy.

Now we know he went out in a waged war, but we don't see him sticking a sword in someone's belly and leaving it there. We don't see him using a jawbone of a donkey. We don't see him with an ox go. We don't see him putting a fleece out.

[28 : 42] All we know is that God raises him up, the Spirit of the Lord overcomes him, and then he goes and sets his people free. So that's all we know about him. There's no crazy stories. There's no rebellion. We know that he's faithful because he's been faithful from the time they came into the land.

He was with Caleb when they went to the land of the giants, and he fought the giants with Caleb. He actually captured a city and took Caleb's daughter as his bride. He is one who is seen as righteous, and he is one of the few, by the way, in the book of Judges that is introduced to us as righteous.

He is one of the few that we see, and there's nothing bad that we have to say about him. But what we do notice is their dependence, each one of the judges' dependence upon the Lord God to use them and empower them.

And we meet this first with Othniel because it says the Lord raised him up. So even in his righteousness, even in his relationship with Caleb, who was faithful, even in his warrior mindset going and capturing cities, he looks around, and the nation is rebelling, and the nation is in captivity here, and the nation all of a sudden is not doing so well.

But even Othniel didn't make a decision, hey, I'm going to go set them free. He didn't do that until the Lord raised him up. And then we're reminded of the fact that it says, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him.

[29 : 51] So even righteous Othniel, the proven warrior, could not deliver the people of Israel without the power and the presence of the Spirit of the Lord because the Spirit of the Lord overcame him and used him.

We find this often in the Old Testament where the Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit, comes upon people and uses them for a season and then passes off of them.

Very seldom do we find someone being filled with the Spirit. That's something that is used for New Testament believers after Pentecost. We do find one in the Old Testament that I have found that says that he was filled with the Spirit from that day forward.

That was David after he was anointed by Samuel. When he's anointed in his father's house, it says the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he was filled with the Spirit until that day forward. That's the only one that I've ever found in the Old Testament.

Others, the Spirit comes upon them and moves them and uses them and empowers them, but he's never in them. What a great benefit we have, right? We had the Spirit in us.

[30 : 55] We are filled with the Spirit or we can be filled with the Spirit. We can also suppress the Spirit or we can push down the Spirit by our actions or by our decisions or even by our busyness, but we have the ability, the capacity to be filled with the Spirit because the wording there is continue to be filled with the Spirit.

But what we see here is even Othniel depended upon the Lord God to deliver or to use him to deliver the people before him. And then as they rebel again, we see that God raises up Ehud, the Benjamites.

So over and over again, we see the dependence upon God to deliver. Not just the people, but the deliverers themselves were dependent, totally, completely dependent upon God to use them.

Why? Because deliverance is not the work of man, but the work of God, right? Deliverance by man is vain. But when it comes to God delivering, God can use the most unlikely of candidates to do the most unbelievable things.

Warren Wearsby says that Ehud being a left-handed man, if you read the original text, and I don't know, this is one interpretation, not many are interpreted this way. The Benjamites, the tribe of Benjamin, the name of Benjamin means son of my right hand, right?

[32 : 16] You know that. Benjamin means son of my right hand. So the son of my right hand, the right hand is always seen as a place of authority. The tribe of Benjamin throughout the Old Testament has this really unique quality about it.

Most of the time, Benjamites are portrayed as ambidextrous, which means they can use both their right and their left hand. Ehud here is seen as being a left-handed man. Warren Wearsby points out that in the original language, it implies that his right hand had been disabled, that he had a deformity about him, that he was only left-handed.

He was not ambidextrous, that there was something wrong with his right hand. So Warren Wearsby reminds us that if they were taking a popularity vote and everybody says, hey, we're being held captive by the Moabites and the Amalites and the Amorites and we need to pick someone to deliver us, let's pick that man with the crippled right hand.

Nobody would have said that, right? Yet this is the very one that God raises up. Nobody probably would have picked Shamgar who was out working in the field and had an ox goad and he didn't even have any weapons or anything to his hand because we find out later that they didn't even have any swords in the land, they didn't even have any shields in the land, all he had was a farming implement in his hand.

Nobody would have said, let's get Shamgar to set us free. He'll kill 600 with that thing. God always uses the most unlikely of people because, again, it reminds us that people in a desperate condition don't need a better man.

[33 : 38] We need God to do a better work. People in desperate condition do not need the strength of man. They need to rely and depend totally upon God to set them free.

And we see this, this reminder here that deliverance is not by man. Deliverance is completely and totally by the Lord God alone. And he uses these people to do it.

The third and final thing we see is the deliverance, the actual deliverance that is accomplished through them. Because when man is in a desperate condition and God raises up a deliverer and he sends them to accomplish a purpose, that which God intends to bring, to come about, actually does come about.

Because it says he sent Othnil, and Othnil, he came and he put the hands of Cush and Rish and Thame into his, you know, he overcame the Mesopotamians there. And it says, and then the land had rest for 40 years.

The land had rest for 40 years. After Ehud, and we're not going to get here to dissect how Ehud goes in, and it's a pretty amazing story, but it's also pretty intentional.

[34 : 51] It had a lot of planning that went on into it. And even when he told the king, I have a message for you from God, it was customary for the kings to stand up to hear the message. So all this was intentional, his scheming and his planning and the fact that he's left-handed and he has his dagger on his right thigh, probably the inside of his right thigh so that he could have got past the guards.

A lot of bravery there as well in all this account that goes on. But what we see here is even he, it says that after that, the land had rest for 80 years. Right?

80 years, 40 years, and 80 years. The point we need to see here is that when God delivers his people, it is a literal, physical deliverance. That is, that which was enslaving them, that which was overcoming them, was removed.

It was no longer there. The land had rest after deliverance came from Othnil. The land has rest after deliverance comes from Ehud. We don't know about Shamgar, we just know that he did a mighty work and it says that he judged Israel.

But we know that God had a purpose for him and God used this and God actually brought about the deliverance that he intended to bring about. Othnil didn't fail, Ehud didn't fail.

[35 : 58] Even though the cards kind of were stacked against him, even though it seemed like the most unlikely people to do this thing, what God intended to do actually came about and there was rest.

The land had rest, which means the deliverance was full and final. Now, with each one of them, when that deliverer dies, then people rebel and revolt again and they go back and they need another deliverer.

Now this is where we get to this beautiful picture for us. Because we're looking at the deliverance accomplished by them. When God raises up a deliverer and he sends them to a desperate people and he empowers that deliverer to set his people free, his people are literally free as long as that deliverer is alive.

As long as he remains. There's rest in the land. So the deliverer that God appoints and that God sends actually does what God intended.

Set his people free. Now the ultimate reality in this is it's pointing us to someone greater. Man in his desperate condition needs God to empower and to raise up someone to set us free because we cannot do it ourselves.

[37 : 22] And in crying out to God and even when we didn't cry out to God, God raises up the ultimate deliverer who is Christ. Not to set us free from Cush and Rishathim, not to set us free from Eglon, not to set us free from the Moabites, the Amorites, the Amalekites, not to set us free from the Philistines, but to set us free from ourselves.

Right? God raises up a deliverer that would set us free. And he'd come, the Bible says, John the Baptist points to him and says he's the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world who would come to take away the sin of man.

He'd remove the sin, not the sins, not the things we do. We don't have a sins problem. Our problem is not the bad stuff we do. We have a sin problem. The problem is who we are.

Right? We do bad things because of who we are. Remember what we said in the introduction? Their decisions and their actions were a direct result of their theology. When they were out of relationship with the Lord their God, they could not help but do bad things.

Our actions are a theological problem, not an external problem. We can change our environment, we can change our circumstances and we still do bad things because we have an internal problem.

[38 : 31] It's who we are. Right? And the deliverer that God raises up is one to take away the sin. He addresses the sin problem. That is who we are on the inside. The beauty of it is when God determines to deliver his people, he always brings it about.

It is a full deliverance. He does not fail. He does not fall short. When God raises up a deliverer, he always brings it about.

So that which the father intended for the son to accomplish has been accomplished. Now, there was rest in the land as long as what?

The deliverer was alive. The beauty of it all for us is our deliverer lives forevermore. There will be no and there was rest in the land until because Jesus has already been there, defeated that and walked out of that.

He eternally delivers and sets free. So, conclusion, bring all this together. When the doubly wicked Cushan whispers in our ear that he still rules over us, let's bring this application down.

[39 : 54] When the Cushan rishthame whispers in our ear, I still rule over you, all we need to do to remind him is that our line from the tribe of Judah, our Othnil, who is Jesus Christ, is not dead yet.

So, there's still rest in the land. That deliverance that he accomplished is a full deliverance. We fail, we stumble, we fall, we falter.

We backslide and we mess up, not because we're no longer free, but because we willingly choose to rebel. And we need to be reminded that when Christ sets us free, we are free indeed and there is rest in the land.

The Bible says in the book of Hebrews that the people of Israel failed to enter into the rest that God promised them through Joshua and that there is a day of rest appointed.

It says, and today is the day of salvation. That day of rest is the rest that is found in Christ. And it's a day of rest. It will not be rest for 40 years or 80 years.

[41 : 02] It is that eternal day of rest because our deliverer lives forevermore. Here we see God's answer to man's problem with the rise or the raising up of the judge that meets our greatest need for his greatest glory in Judges 3 verses 7 through 31.

Thank you, brothers. and send in.

so, so, so, Thank you.