

Judges: Broken Heroes/Faithful God

JUDGES 3

The Weapons of Our Warfare

2 Corinthians 10:4 (NIV)

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

1 John 2:15-17 (AMP)

Do not love the world [of sin that opposes God and His precepts], nor the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world—the lust and sensual craving of the flesh and the lust and longing of the eyes and the boastful pride of life [pretentious confidence in one's resources or in the stability of earthly things]—these do not come from the Father, but are from the world.

17 The world is passing away, and with it its lusts [the shameful pursuits and ungodly longings]; but the one who does the will of God and carries out His purposes lives forever.

1. Othniel: Divine Power

- God's mercy toward His people

Judges 3:1-4 (NLT)

These are the nations that the LORD left in the land to test those Israelites who had not experienced the wars of Canaan. 2 He did this to teach warfare to generations of Israelites who had no experience in battle.

3 These are the nations: the Philistines (those living under the five Philistine rulers), all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites living in the mountains of Lebanon from Mount Baal-hermon to Lebo-hamath.

4 These people were left to test the Israelites—to see whether they would obey the commands the LORD had given to their ancestors through Moses.

- God's anger toward His people

Judges 3:5-7 (NLT)

So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and they intermarried with them. Israelite sons married their daughters, and Israelite daughters were given in marriage to their sons. And the Israelites served their gods.

7 The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight. They forgot about the LORD their God, and they served the images of Baal and the Asherah poles.

8 Then the LORD burned with anger against Israel, and he turned them over to King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram-naharaim. And the Israelites served Cushan-rishathaim for eight years.

- God never allows His people to sin successfully.

- **God's salvation for His people**

Judges 3:9-11 (NLT)

9 But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD raised up a rescuer to save them. His name was Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother, Kenaz.

10 **The Spirit of the LORD came upon him**, and he became Israel's judge. He went to war against King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram, and the LORD gave Othniel victory over him. 11 So there was peace in the land for forty years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

- **Human power is insufficient to achieve the victory God desires for His people.**

Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV)

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit." says the Lord of hosts.

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Ephesians 5:18

Don't be drunk with wine - that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit.

2. Ehud: Divine Strategy

Judges 3:12 (NLT)

Once again the Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight, and the LORD gave King Eglon of Moab control over Israel because of their evil.

Judges 3:13-14 (NLT)

13 Eglon enlisted the Ammonites and Amalekites as allies, and then he went out and defeated Israel, taking possession of Jericho, the city of palms. 14 And the Israelites served Eglon of Moab for eighteen years.

Judges 3:15 (NLT)

But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD again raised up a deliverer. His name was Ehud son of Gera, **a left-handed man of the tribe of Benjamin**.

Judges 3:15-17 (NLT)

The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tribute money to King Eglon of Moab.

16 So Ehud made a double-edged dagger that was about a foot long, and he strapped it to his right thigh, keeping it hidden under his clothing.

17 He brought the tribute money to Eglon, who was a very fat man.

The **second problem** was gaining **a private audience with the king** without making his attendants and guards suspicious.

Judges 3:18-22 (NLT)

18 After delivering the payment, Ehud started home with those who had helped carry the tribute.

19 But when Ehud reached the stone idols near Gilgal, he turned back. He came to Eglon and said, "I have a secret message for you." So the king commanded his servants, "Be quiet!" and he sent them all out of the room.

20 Ehud walked over to Eglon, who was sitting alone in a cool upstairs room. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you!" As King Eglon rose from his seat, 21 Ehud reached with his left hand, pulled out the dagger strapped to his right thigh, and plunged it into the king's belly.

22 The dagger went so deep that the handle disappeared beneath the king's fat. So Ehud did not pull out the dagger, and the king's bowels discharged.

The next problem was how to escape from the palace without getting caught...

Judges 3:23-25 (NLT)

23 Then Ehud closed and locked the doors of the room and escaped down the latrine.

24 After Ehud was gone, the king's servants returned and found the doors to the upstairs room locked. They thought he might be relieving himself in the latrine in the room, so they waited. But when the king didn't come out after a long delay, they became concerned and got a key. And when they opened the doors, they found their master dead on the floor.

His final problem was to rally the troops and attack the enemy.

Judges 3:26-30 (NLT)

26 While the servants were waiting, Ehud escaped, passing the stone idols on his way to Seirah. 27 When he arrived in the hill country of Ephraim, Ehud sounded a call to arms. Then he led a band of Israelites down from the hills.

28 "Follow me," he said, "for **the LORD has given you victory over Moab your enemy.**" So they followed him. And the Israelites took control of the shallow crossings of the Jordan River across from Moab, preventing anyone from crossing.

29 They attacked the Moabites and killed about 10,000 of their strongest and most able-bodied warriors. Not one of them escaped. 30 So Moab was conquered by Israel that day, and there was peace in the land for eighty years.

- Like Ehud, we can turn a disability into a possibility when we fully depend on the Lord.

3. Shamgar: Divine Courage

Judges 3:31 (NLT)

After Ehud, Shamgar son of Anath rescued Israel. He once killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad.

- Like these judges, we, too, will win the victory as we depend on God's divine power, strategy, and courage, no matter our limitations.