

LIFEGROUPS

OTHNIEL & EHUD - An Unforgettable Redemption

Read Judges 3:7-31

1. What does it mean to 'forget the Lord' (v7)? Do we ever forget God and, if so, what causes us to do this?
2. How do we 'remember' God?
3. Why does God allow his chosen people to be subjugated and oppressed by another nation (see also **1 Corinthians 11:32**)? Has God ever dealt with you in a similar manner?
4. What is the purpose/role of a judge?
5. What is meant by the phrase: 'Spirit of the Lord came on [Othniel]' (v10)?
6. In the culture of that time, Ehud's left-handedness would have been seen as a weakness and therefore he seems an unlikely candidate to be used by God. Are there any elements of your character that you feel prevent God from using you?
7. Eglon acts as a warning as someone who has fallen under the wrath of God. Do you think we fully appreciate / take seriously the anger of God?
8. What does this passage reveal of God's ultimate plan for mankind?

Leaders Notes

These notes are here as guidelines or commentary notes to help the leader. Let the Word of God lead you and your Lifegroup to HEAR God's prophetic message this week as you explore His Word together.

A little context on Othniel

The first judge was Othniel. He came from good stock this man for he was Caleb's nephew. The name Othniel means the 'power of God'. We read that 'the Spirit of the Lord came upon Him' and he went out and defeated that doubly-wicked black Cushan! When Israel had forgotten their need of God, the Lord does two things; First, He allows them to be defeated by that which their own hearts were being drawn to - prideful independence. Second, God raised up a deliver who will remind them again of the power of God and their constant need to looking and relying upon God for His power in their life. In Othniel we see this in the meaning of his name, which means 'the power of God', and also in his life in that 'the Spirit of the Lord came upon Him.'

We see that God raised up Othniel, a visible sign of His own power, and the enemy was defeated. And in doing so, we read that the 'land had rest for 40 years.' (Judges 3:11). Is this not a good picture of what happens in our own heart once we come to know and trust in the power of God? We rest. The Israelites in the wilderness didn't find rest because they 'did not remember His power'. But those that do remember find rest, for they know that nothing is outside of God's control and power.

May we learn from the lessons presented to us here in the book of Judges. Be careful of him who was the first enemy to completely conquer Israel - the prideful and exalted king of Aram! We should judge the pride and independence in our own heart first, and then rely upon the power of God for our deliverance. Thus, Othniel did, and the land had rest for 40 years.

A little context on Ehud

Ehud, the second judge, delivered Israel from Eglon, king of Moab (the cycle of sin continues as this King of Moab, takes control of the Promised Land. The Moabites, strangely enough, are descendants of Moab. Now Moab was a relative of the Israelites, as he was born through an incestuous relationship between Lot and his eldest daughter). Verses 12-14 give a standard introduction, telling of the Israelites' apostasy (the dictionary definition of apostasy meaning a total desertion of or departure from one's religion, principle, party or cause) and of God's giving them into Eglon's control for 18 years. The story that follows -of Ehud killing Eglon-is rather graphic, highlighting the rough, even grotesque nature of this period and many of its "heroes".