

Judges 08-02-08b

Let's resume our study now in the book of Judges, chapter 3. So we've seen that this first major crisis, the first really serious sort of overarching threat to all tribes episode, comes from Mesopotamia, from darkly double evil. Comes down and Othniel the Moshiah is raised up by God. God first delivers Israel into the hand of Kushan and then delivers Kushan into the hand of Yahweh or Yahshua, not Yahweh, but the Moshiah, Othniel.

And you think about the big picture of human history, we are initially delivered into the darkness, literally we are delivered, we are conceived in iniquity and born in sin. And we are then, in the same way that God by design delivers us into the power of evil, he sends a deliverer and to the extent that we respond, and remember Othniel didn't go up there single-handedly and wipe out the whole Mesopotamian army, Israel rallied, Israel responded to the leadership and to the message and to the vision and to the Shafat, if you will, the analysis and the forming of a conclusion and the implementation of this solution. They responded, they followed, they did like they did behind the original Yahshua and this resulted in deliverance and rest for 40 years, for the remainder of their generation.

They did not have this kind of threat again. But then that deliverer moves off the scene and you sort of reset, okay, now what can you do on your own? What can you do without the deliverer? Othniel, the son of Kenaz, died. So in Judges 3, verse 12, we read, and the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.

And this literally has the idea, it means they did again to do. It's an awkward phrase in Hebrew, but it made sense to the Hebrews, it's awkward if you render it literally into English. But it says, and they did again to do.

And this is from the verb Yassaf, which is one word for doing, and it means to repeat. And then later on you have Asah. And you may remember that there are a couple of different words in Hebrew that are related.

Barah is the word that is often used for God creating. Barashit is where Genesis gets its Hebrew name. In the beginning, God created.

Barah. And sometimes you hear people say something out of nothing. It's not quite that clear cut.

But it has the idea of bringing something into being, and it has no reference to the materials or the wherewithal. Asah, on the other hand, is often used for to make or to manufacture. You take something existing.

We were just talking on the break about how the evolutionary theory people like to talk about how mutation and natural selection can explain the development of all kinds of life. But what they're dealing with is a bunch of existing materials. They take existing organisms, existing

molecules, existing amino acids, existing DNA and chromosomes.

They say, look, you can shuffle these and get new things. Well, that begs the question, where did the complex machinery that creates these proteins and these amino acids and these molecules and the RNA and the DNA, where did that all come from? So, you are going in and producing, you know, they take fireflies and they mix it with lettuce and you get lettuce that glows in the dark and stuff like this. Well they're working with existing materials.

That's Asah. No, I saw that. They have a head of lettuce that glows in the dark.

I don't know what good it is. But they were just demonstrating that they can take the spliced genes in and produce strange effects. And believe me, well, my prediction is that much of the woe that will come upon the earth after we leave is going to be caused by man monkeying with what he should not.

Some of this stuff is going to get loose and have unintended consequences and it is going to wipe out crops. It is going to wipe out people. There are going to be completely unmanageable forces at work when you start slicing and dicing the material from which things are made.

But this is Asah and the children of Israel, again, manufactured evil. They took, and it's very poetic here, because they made it out of existing materials. There's already idolatry.

There's already Canaanites. There's already the opportunity there. The materials exist because they did not drive these influences out.

They did not extinguish and exterminate them. And so they manufacture evil from what is left. So the children of Israel, again, did evil in the sight of the Lord.

And this is the evil, ha-ra. It's not an amorphous, nebulous, unknown evil. It is the evil.

It is the evil of disloyalty. It is the evil of worshipping other gods. It's the evil.

In the eye. Now, remember the first time, what happened? God's nose got hot. Here you've got evil in the eyes of the Lord, yet again.

Remember the first time up here, the children of Israel did evil in the eyes of the Lord, in the sight of the Lord. So he turned them over to the hand of Kushan Reshathaim here. They again did evil in the sight of the Lord.

So the Lord strengthened Eglon, king of Moab, against Israel because they had done evil in the sight, in the eyes of the Lord. Now in the previous episode, we looked back at what Mesopotamia means to the historical minded Hebrew. Wow, that's where great-great-great-great-grandpa Abraham came from.

Now you've got the king of Moab. Look at what he does in verse 13. He gathered to himself the people of Ammon.

That makes sense, because they're brothers. Moab and Ammon are half-brothers, aren't they? Each of them peoples generated through incest. Lot's two daughters, you remember, after the Sodom and Gomorrah destruction, they're up in the cave.

Lot's feeling sorry for himself. The daughters get him drunk and get pregnant by him. Moab means from, and Av is my father.

Moab means from my father. I've got a son from my father. And Ammon is my own people.

He can't be any more my own people because I've produced him by a union with my own father. Moab and Ammon. And Amalek.

Now what do we know about Amalek? Where have we encountered Amalek? This is the first foreigners that Israel meets. They're on the way out of Egypt. Amalek's on the way in.

Many think that this is where you get your Hyksos dynasties in Egypt, if you fix the chronology. But think about it historically. We start out with Mesopotamia and the darkness and the evil that Abraham left.

God called him out from his people and his kindred and his country to go to a new land. After he comes to that new land and hooks up with his nephew, his nephew does what? Goes to live in the most evil city there is because the grass is greener. Takes his flocks and herds down there.

Next thing you know he's a judge. He's sitting in the gate. He's a big man on campus down there in Sodom.

And there's a deliverance. Somebody looks back. Two daughters are left and you end up with lots of grandsons.

Or should I say sons. They're sons and grandsons. They can call a lot daddy and granddaddy both at the same time.

It's just really weird. And their mother is sort of their aunt. I mean, it's very strange.

But I guess their mother is sort of their sister. Their mother is their sister. It's just too complex.

I have my own grandpa. That song arrives out of something like that. So Moab and Ammon.

But think about it. Think historically. We started with Mesopotamia and Abraham.

And now we're down to the later generation with the sons of Lot, Moab and Ammon. And after Abraham escapes that evil, this is a great evil. Nobody can deny that Sodom and the episodes all surrounding Lot, he just gets tangled up in evil from start to finish.

And why? He does not disassociate himself. He chooses to associate himself with Sodom. He associates himself with drunkenness and poor judgment.

And he ends up sort of being a victim of his own bad judgment. So here comes Moab and Ammon and Amalek. Just when you think you've escaped Egypt, who do you encounter? Amalek.

There's got to be a victory over Amalek, or there's going to be trouble. So Moab, Ammon and Amalek came and defeated Israel because God strengthened Eglon, Moab, from my people. From my father, actually.

From my father, Moab. Eglon, king of Moab, is strengthened by God, went and defeated Israel. And what does he do? He takes possession of Jericho.

The city of Palms is Jericho. It's the only city in the Bible ever called the city of Palms. Remember the guy went off and built a... You know, you destroy one town, but the guy escapes, he goes and builds another one just like it.

Well, why does Jericho get defeated here? Jericho was taken, and Jericho was occupied, but God's... Remember the curse? Anybody who rebuilds the walls of this city? And many, many years later, a guy is actually going to raise the walls, and he's going to bury a couple of sons in doing it. He buries one son as he builds the walls, another son as he hangs the gates, because of that curse. So the Israelites knew enough.

They said, well, at least we won't rebuild the walls here. Well, now the city's got no walls. The protection of God is gone, and a city without walls is easily taken.

So the city of Palms, the city of Jericho, is taken by Eglon. And the children of Israel served Eglon, king of Moab, eighteen years. How many years under old black-hearted double evil? Eight years.

Now it's eighteen years. But when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjamite. Now Mesopotamia is up at the north, and Kushan had to come way down from Mesopotamia, although it's actually closer to Haran.

At this time, the Aram Harim is up, is closer. It's up in the northern middle area there. And so he came down from the north.

Now Moab and Ammon are coming from the southeast into the land. And Amalek is either coming from the original land of the Amalekites, or actually coming back up from Egypt at this point. Because if our understanding of chronology is correct, they are ruling in Egypt at this time.

They've taken advantage of the plagues and the destruction and filled the vacuum. And they can actually be coming up from Egypt. And they wouldn't be called Egyptians, because the Israelites know who the Egyptians are.

These would still be the Amalekites. But, as soon as they cry out to the Lord, the Lord delivers. He raises up a deliverer for them.

And once again, in verse 15, we have this term. He raises up for them a Moshiach, Ehud, the son of Gera, a Benjamite. The Benjamites are famous for being lefties, which is God's sense of humor.

What does Benjamin mean? Son of the right hand. So, they're all lefties. A left-handed man.

By him, the children of Israel sent tribute to Eglon, king of Moab. So, they're oppressed. It's 18 years.

It's been going on for 18 years. And Eglon's got to take the bags of money. There are servants and carts.

And they're taking all of this loot up to Eglon. So, Ehud got sick of this. And God raised him up.

And he got inspired. And he said, you know what? Enough. And so, he thought, well, now, how am I going to do anything? And he, the deliverer, just like Othniel before him, analyzed the situation and said, you know, if you cut the head off the snake, the rest of it's going to die.

We don't need a big military victory here. Othniel had to go win. All Israel went up and they went in battle.

And God delivered the army into his hand. He was a warrior. And that was a military victory.

This is a different enemy. It's an alliance. Mesopotamia was one land.

This is an alliance of three. Moab, Ammon, and Amalek. And Ehud analyzes this.

He says, you know what? The key to this whole thing is Eglon. If I can get rid of Eglon, this alliance will fall apart. The Moabites will no longer be a threat.

I just have to get rid of Eglon. So, he gets his double-edged sword. First mentioned in the Bible of a two-edged sword.

The word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. Swords in this day were more of the Romphias type, if you get one big whack, they're heavy. They're made out of bronze, mostly.

And they didn't have the shorter type of sword, like the Roman short sword, the machaira. These are the swing it once and hope you hack the guy in half. So, this is an innovation.

Ehud innovates. He thinks, and he says, you know, I'm not going to be able to drag some great big honking sword in there and say, well, this is a tribute sword or something. They won't buy that.

I need something that works out of sight. I've got to be able to hide this thing. And so, he makes this special weapon.

It's a two-edged sword. It's a cubit in length. How long is a cubit? 18 inches, elbow to the fingertip.

And you can imagine that this would be something that you could strap to your thigh and it would be hidden under your robe. People didn't fight with that kind of thing. It would be useless in a pitched battle.

This is not the off and heel against the Mesopotamians motif. This is going to be a one-on-one thing. And one-on-one with Eglon, he's going to have the sharp two-edged sword.

Double-edged cubit in length. He fastened it under. Wouldn't it be great if they could find this sword? You know, I mean, these things are virtually indestructible.

It's made out of bronze. They dig up a grave somewhere down there. And somewhere in the land of Benjamin, they dig up a grave.

And here's this funky two-edged sword like nothing they've ever seen before. The archaeologists are scratching their heads. Well, how did this get here? And it's, you know, it's right there in the Bible.

I bet they wouldn't tell us if they found it. So, he brought the tribute to Eglon, King of Moab. Now, I want to point out that this is deceitful.

This is tricky. He didn't march up to the gate and say, I got a sword here and I want to see the king. He said, I've got the tribute.

I'm harmless. I'm doing exactly what I'm told. I have no ill intent.

It's deceitful. There's nothing wrong with being God's deliverer and being deceitful. Rahab was deceitful.

The prophet was deceitful. Sometimes you have to, if you're talking to sinful people, you've got to tell them what they need to hear so that they can be destroyed. Do you think the Israelites marching around the city of Jericho put them in a state of alarm and gave them an opportunity to repent? No, they thought, well, these people are nuts.

And they found out different. So, he went ahead and presented the tribute. And he had all these other guys with him.

And the opportunity did not present itself. He was surrounded by people. He thought, you know what? This could get ugly.

If I do anything here, I'm going to endanger my fellow Israelites. He's thinking the whole time.

And he says, the key to this thing is Eglon.

It's only Eglon I need to expunge from the equation here. And I've got all of these servants. And so he goes in and he delivers the tribute.

He's watching for an opportunity. Maybe he's done this before. He's heard tell from previous purveyors of tribute.

Eglon is a very fat man. He's going to be not much of a moving target. He's not going to sprint.

This isn't going to be Asahel and Abner running down the road. This is sort of a static thing. So, he's going to get one shot at it.

So, after he finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. It's an important detail. He says, this is my fight.

This is my idea. I don't want to endanger or involve anybody else. Opposite of Othniel, who calls all Israel to join him, and goes up and leads an army attack against the army of Mesopotamia.

It's not like that at all. This is a one-on-one. This is going to be Ehud and Eglon.

So, he goes ahead and presents. He's kind of in the security. Everybody's comfortable with him.

They know who he is. And he says he sent everybody away, but he himself turned back from the stone images that were at Gilgal. What? Gilgal? How did Gilgal get into this thing? What are the stone images? You say, well, what do I know about Gilgal? Gilgal is the first place the Israelites camped after they came across the Jordan, right? And were there any stones involved in that? Did they not carry stones out of the riverbed and pile them up? Here's the trouble with that.

Those were Eben stones. Those are Eben Etser, stone of help. They are unmarked, unmodified rocks.

They're just boulders. They pulled these boulders out, and they piled them up. This word is the word that many other places in Scripture is translated graven image.

This is a machined stone. This is a tool-worked stone. Now, what Eglon has done is kind of like what Antiochus Epiphanes is going to do much later.

He goes to Jericho, and he says, so your God gave you the city of Jericho? Jericho is mine. So your God had you stack up some stones? I'm going to put some stones at Gilgal. My stones are bigger and better than your stones.

My victory is bigger and better than your victory. You think you took Jericho, and that's your big claim to fame? You know, the walls fell down. I'm sitting in Jericho now.

You think you got some rocks out of the river? Well, look, I got idols standing here, and they're

gilded, and they're worked with tools, and they're a lot better than your old crummy pile of rocks. My stuff is better than your stuff. Of course, Eglon defeated an unwallled town.

And Eglon's carved stones have no representative value. They didn't come from the bottom of a raging spring flood river through supernatural access. Israel defeated Jericho through supernatural access, supernatural action.

Israel got those rocks out of the Jordan River bed through supernatural action, supernatural access. Eglon is a fake. Eglon has come lately with a pseudo-victory in Jericho.

He walked over an unwallled town. The Israelites were told, don't fortify the town. You shouldn't need to if God is with you.

God is your wall. God is your protection. God is your army.

But when they rejected God, well, now you truly are exposed. And so Eglon walks over them. It's no big trick to take the city of Palms, and it's no big trick to carve some idols and set them up and say, my stuff's better than your stuff.

He is a pseudo. He is an auntie. He is an instead of God.

He's an instead of power. He's a fake, and he's fat. Well, listen now.

The word for glory in Hebrew is kavod, and kavod means fat. Kavod means heavy. He's got a fake victory.

He's got a fake memorial, and he's got a fake glory. That's why we are told, among other things, that he's a very fat man. When he had finished, when he, Ehud, had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who carried it.

He himself turned back from the stone images that were at Gilgal. Evidently, Eglon, you remember Gilgal and Jericho. You remember the distance is very short.

And so Ehud does this, and evidently the opportunity didn't present. And he has left. He sent everybody else away.

It wasn't really an opportunity. And he's going back toward Gilgal, and he sees those images. And he's thinking, you know, that's not the right memorial.

This is not what God has set me to do. He has actually left. And when he sees that, it turns him around.

He says, wait a minute. Not another year. Not another day.

Not another time. This guy is fake. And the images evidently were the last straw in his mind.

Because he's thinking what Joshua reminded them of with the stones that came from the

riverbed. There is a supernatural God of Israel. There's a supernatural power that gave us victory in Jericho.

Not this guy. We have a genuine memorial to the almighty God who brought us out of the land of Egypt. And God has a glory that transcends this fat man.

And he turned around. When he saw the idols at Gilgal, he turned around. He said, oh no.

Had enough. He himself turned back. It says from the stone images.

But it's at the stone images. That's where he did an about face. He said, no, I'm going back.

And he said, he went back and he said, I forgot to tell you something, O King. But it's for your ears only. It's another bald-faced lie.

Sort of. It is a secret message. But it's not the kind of secret the king's going to be happy about.

I have a secret message for you, O King. So the king says, oh. And he sends everybody away.

All who attended him went out from him. So Ehud came to him. Now he is sitting upstairs in his cool private chamber.

He's upstairs in Jericho. It's more of a breeze up there. The hot reflected sunshine from the rocks and the rubble and the debris of the walls of Jericho that would waft over.

He's up above that. It's cooler up there. And he's sitting up there.

Of course, he's enormous. And Ehud came to him and said, at first he said, I have a secret message. Now he says, I have a message from God for you.

And now Eglon is pretty excited about this. And so he heists himself up onto his feet. He wants to lean in and be sure he gets this message from God.

Ehud reached with his left hand, took the dagger from his right thigh. There was probably a cursory pat-down search that was done. But left-handedness was a very unusual condition in the ancient world, it would appear.

You may have seen there's been a recent scientific opinion rendered that all blue-eyed people have a common ancestor umpteen thousand years ago. Somebody had a mutation and all blue-eyed people are related to this one individual who popped the blue eyes at some point. And it's a gene that they found that where the melanin or whatever the brown stuff is in your eyes didn't get turned on right.

It was melanin or melatonin. I think it's melanin. The pigmentation.

Well, this left-handedness was some sort of an inherited trait and it showed up by God's sense of humor in the tribe of Benjamin. And so nobody expects it. Evidently the Cainites were totally

unfamiliar with left-handedness.

And so normally people would reach across to draw a weapon. It's not like, you know, high noon at the OK Corral or something. It's, they would reach across because you want to slash on the way up.

You don't want to be trying to get the thing out from here and then raise it and hack with it. You would make a sweeping motion. And so right-handed men strapped their sword on their left thigh.

Well, Ehud has got his hidden weapon strapped to his right thigh. So when they check for weapons, they check the guy's left thigh. If his left thigh doesn't have a weapon, he's okay.

And Ehud knows this. So he pulls it from his right thigh, reaches with his left hand, pulls across and jams it into his belly. It's double-edged.

It is designed to pierce. Piercing even sharper than any two-edged sword. It's not a hacking sword.

This is not Samuel and Agag. I want to chop you to mincemeat. This is a stabbing thing, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit and the joints in the marrow.

He pierces him. He rams it into him. And he's an enormously fat guy.

It's an 18-inch sword. Well, this guy is bigger than 18 inches from front to back. And the sword just disappears.

And Ehud is there up to the elbow with this sword. And the sword evidently had enough of a handle to prevent Ehud's hand from sliding down to the sharp part. And it's like a fishhook effect.

He can't get it back out. The sword is completely buried. Now, it says, Even the hilt went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly.

Now, why are we given these gory details? This false glory is the undoing of Eglon. You can survive certain kinds of stab wounds, but not if they can't get the sword back out. And his pride goeth before fall, a haughty spirit before destruction, and a false glory.

This fat is the human version of Kavod. And it is his undoing. Now, I debated how much detail to go into here, but I'm going to do my best to give you an accurate representation.

People were not as squeamish in ancient days as we tend to be now. It says in your New King James that he did not draw the dagger out of his belly, and his entrails came out. There is no word for entrails here.

The phrase is literally something approximately, it came out the back. Now, you would think,

well, this is the 18-inch dagger coming out the back. That's not it either.

As the next few lines will make clear, the contents of Eglon's bowels came out. He is a fat man, and there is a lot of this inside him. It's important for the story.

When his abdomen is pierced, this 18-inch sword slices through his intestines. He's got a hole in the front and a hole in the back, and his intestinal contents come out, mostly out the back. So, there is a reason for this.

So, then Ehud went out through the porch and shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them. Now, this is actually a quick exit, unobserved, and he locks the doors from the inside. And as is so often the case in Hebrew, this is actually backward.

He shut the doors of the upper room and locked them, and then he went out through the porch. But in Hebrew, you'd have to translate this, Ehud went out through the porch, having shut the doors of the upper room behind him, having locked them. He can't leave and then come back and lock the doors.

But you can see that order is not always given in Hebrew the way it is in English, just as in the creation story and elsewhere. Now, there is a dead king with a lot of effluvia around him in the upper room. So, when Ehud had made his escape by an outside, he climbed down the trellis or whatever and got away, Eglon's servants came to look, and to their surprise, the doors of the upper room were locked.

And they said, he is probably covering his feet in the cool chamber. Why would they surmise? They didn't say he's taking a nap, he's drunk. They said, well, he's going to the bathroom.

Why would they say this? Because there is evidence to this effect coming from the room. That's why. It's a hot day.

He went up there for it to be cooler, and there is a note in the air that would indicate that Eglon is busy attending to his personal needs, if I could put that as delicately as I can. And actually, believe it or not, there's a theological point to be gleaned from going into this level of detail. He is probably literally covering his feet.

You remember Saul went into the cave and was covering his feet when David had the opportunity to kill him and did not, cut off a piece of his robe. This is the standard Hebrew euphemism for elimination. So they waited quite a long time until they were embarrassed.

They said, well, you know, I mean, he's a fat king. These things take time. But hey, you know, sooner or later, somebody's got to check on him.

It's getting close to, this would be something measured in, you know, hours. They said, well, he can't be in there this long. And so they finally were, embarrassed is not the best word.

Their level of concern exceeded their level of respect for his modesty. And they said, we've got

to go in and find out what's happening. Maybe he's had some kind of an accident.

So he still had not opened the doors to the upper room. They therefore took the key and opened them. Now this is fascinating.

If you've ever done a study of locks and keys and this sort of thing, we know almost nothing about ancient locks. But they existed in this day. This is before iron, but here's a lock and it has a key.

And you think, wow, technology in the ancient day. But thinking of this in broader strokes, there is a combination of things that prevents the allies, the servants of Eglon from doing anything to or about Ehud until he is well away. It's a combination of first of all, a false notion of what's actually going on.

And then secondly, they've got to go hunt down the key to unlock this door and get in. But they finally do so. And there was their master fallen dead on the floor in a very ugly scene.

Ehud had escaped while they delayed. This whole episode created the delay that allowed Ehud to escape. Now Ehud, I'm sure, did not plan for this sort of happy circumstance where the servants were led to believe that Eglon was busy and couldn't be disturbed.

But the manner of his death was such that that's what they were led to believe. And so he had time to get well away because they're going to know, of course, well, the last guy in the room and they would mount a pursuit. But Ehud is long gone and he passed beyond the stone images.

Remember the things that turned him around? Now he can look at those things and smile because the guy who put them there is no longer present on the earth. He's got bigger problems. And it happened when he arrived that he blew the trumpet in the mountains of Ephraim.

And the children of Israel went down with him from the mountains and he led them. Then he said to them, follow me, for the Lord has delivered your enemies, the Moabites, into your hand. So they went down after him, seizing the fords of the Jordan leading to Moab and did not allow anyone to cross over.

So they basically bottled them in. They came over and jauntily and haughtily took over parts of Israel. Well, they literally cut them off at the pass.

They cut off their avenue of escape, surrounded them, flanked them, and then decimated them. At that time, they killed 10 LFs of Moabites. These are 10 military units, 10 thousands, in the sense we've come to understand that word.

10 LFs, all stout men of valor, not a man escaped. Ehud recognized that without leadership, these guys were helpless. And with the leader gone, they were just, it's like shooting fish in a

barrel.

So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel and the land had rest for 80 years. Let's do, this is one of the favorite things they used to make us do when I was an English major. You study a piece of literature or a portion of it and they say, well, we want to do a comparison contrast.

Compare and contrast this with something else. Used to be a blue book question on every midterm and final. Compare and contrast the generalship of Robert E. Lee with that of Ulysses S. Grant.

Where are they similar? Where are they different? You can do the same thing here. Compare and contrast the situation with the king of Mesopotamia and the king of Moab. One is met immediately with armed conflict.

There's no record of the king of Kushan dying in that conflict. He sort of represents Satan. Satan is not dead and not gone, but his minions are put to flight.

Here with Ehud, you have the actual cutting off of the head of the serpent, as it were. The killing of the leader and everybody else is decimated. It's just the opposite.

One of them is done overtly with military conflict. The other is stealth, comes in an unexpected way at an unexpected time. Eglon thinks he's going to get something good, a secret message from God, and instead he gets his death.

Everybody is fooled. The servants think one thing is going on, something else has actually happened. They don't know it yet, but their leader is defeated.

Their leader is no longer on the scene. Then you have Ehud going up to the mountains and calling the people down and saying, now let's get them. They're leaderless.

Let's strike while the iron is hot. They cut off the avenues of escape. The first time there was eight years of servitude followed by 40 years of rest.

This time there is 18 years of servitude followed by 80 years of rest. Things are essentially doubled, although you have 10 plus 8 instead of 18. 18 really in Hebrew terms breaks down to three times six.

The most significant numbers there. Six is the number of almost got it six days you labor into all your work. Ten is the number of human completion.

I've used up all my fingers. That's how many there is. So you've got the best that man can do.

This is the manufactured glory, the manufactured victory, the manufactured worship and idols. Everything is manufactured. So this is ten plus eight, actually, to get the 18 years.

And so it's an entirely different situation. But the resulting victory yields two generations of peace. Eglon had gathered not only Moab, but Ammon and Amalek.

But we never hear of anything from Ammon and Amalek again, because that confederation falls apart with the loss of Eglon. One comes from the north, the other comes from the southeast. So we now have accounted for 120 years of rest, right? And you've got 26 years of oppression.

So we're working at about 20% bad stuff, and for every 100 years of rest, you get 20 years of oppression, roughly. So Othniel is first, Ehud is second. And we're now going to have a minor mention of Shamgar.

He gets one verse. Shamgar, the son of Anath, killed 600 men of the Philistines with an ox-goat, and he also delivered Israel. So they had deliverance from the north, now they had deliverance from the threat to the east, southeast, and now they get a deliverance from the threat to the west.

And you get the idea that this also contributes to the rest. They get a 40-year deliverance from Moab, and another 40 years deliverance because of the Philistines being shocked. This brings us to chapter 4 and the story of Deborah.

Notice what brings on the next crisis. When Ehud was dead. As soon as the savior, as soon as the deliverer dies, they can't sustain any spiritual momentum.

They can't sustain any obedience. When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord. It is as though the living deliverer is a reminder.

His presence is a reminder. Whenever they look at Othniel, whenever they look at Ehud, whenever they look at Shamgar, they say, wow, there really is a God in Israel. But as soon as those guys are off the scene, they forget.

They don't have pictures, they don't have movies, they don't have the kind of reminders you would hardly know that Humphrey Bogart and James Cagney are dead because we see them any time we want. But in those days, when a guy was off the scene, out of sight, out of mind. And that living memorial passage from the scene, they are suddenly ripe for disobedience.

So we're going to see next time when we study Deborah and Barak, a third installment. And we're going to see that this also is going to flow in a sort of historical reminder fashion. We started with the Mesopotamia, then we had Moab and Ammon and Amalek.

So who do the armies under Deborah and Barak fight? Who is that enemy? Well, we'll parse this out. I'll give you that for your homework next time. See if you can figure out what this might correspond to.

This is as though God is giving his people a history lesson, trying to get them to remember the

past instead of forgetting it as soon as the messenger of deliverance dies. So we'll pick up in Judges chapter 4 next time. But it is a reminder to us that worship involves not only making requests, bowing down before God, not only serving, not only the worship, but also remembering the name.

Remember the name, remember God. Do we really function well in the absence of the Moshiach? Or do we forget? Well, that's a point of application, but we'll pick up and study in great detail this principle when we get to chapter 4 next time. Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the graphic way that God, the Holy Spirit, can impress these truths upon us. We pray that we will be receptive and impressionable and that we will see clearly the means of implementing the truths of this passage in our lives in the days ahead.

We pray this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.