

How God
Saves

Judges 3:1-11

Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to test Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan. It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, to teach war to those who had not known it before. These are the nations: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the

Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. They were for the testing of Israel, to know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And their daughters they took to themselves

for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.

And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth. Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.

But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. So the land had rest forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

Judges 3:1

Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to test Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan.

Judges 3:4

They were for the testing of Israel, to know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

Deuteronomy 8:2

And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, **testing you to know what was in your heart**, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

In the hope that this will develop
their dependence upon him in every
situation of need.

- David Jackman

Judges 3:2

It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, to teach war to those who had not known it before.

If Joshua had not finished the task of driving out the enemy nations, it was because God had not delivered them into his hands. The reason was given in v. 22. Subsequent generations would not simply inherit the blessings, the rewards of a previous generation's faith. They needed to demonstrate their commitment to Yahweh themselves.

- Daniel Block

These are the nations: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath.

Deuteronomy 7:1-2

When the LORD your God brings you into the land...and clears away many nations before you, **the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites**, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you... then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them..

Jeremiah 2:12-13

Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, for my people have committed two evils: they have **forsaken me**, the fountain of living waters, and **hewed out cisterns for themselves**, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Judges 3:7a

And the people of Israel **did what was evil** in
the sight of the LORD.

Judges 3:7b

They forgot the **LORD** their God and **served the**
Baals and the Asheroth.

For God to fail or refuse to value Himself preeminently would implicate Him in the sin of idolatry. Idolatry is honoring anyone or anything as god, instead of God. If God were ever to act in such a way that He did not seek His own glory, He would be saying that something more valuable than Himself exists, and that is a lie. Worse still, it is idolatrous.

- Sam Storms

Judges 3:8

Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the **people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.**

Judges 2:14

So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them.

Idols never satisfy, but always demand increasingly more, constantly adding to the burdens of our lives and in the end giving nothing of lasting value.

- Richard and Sharon Phillips

**But when the people of Israel cried
out to the LORD, the LORD raised
up a deliverer for the people of
Israel, who saved them**

When God raised up a savior for Israel he was not reacting to any repentance on Israel's part. If anything, he was responding to their misery rather than to their sorrow, to their pain rather than to their penitence.

- Dale Ralph Davis

Judges 3:9-10

Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. **The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel.**

Judges 1:12-13

And Caleb said, “He who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter for a wife.” And **Othniel** the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, **captured it.**

Judges 3:10

The **Spirit of the LORD** was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and **the LORD gave** Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

Numbers 27:18

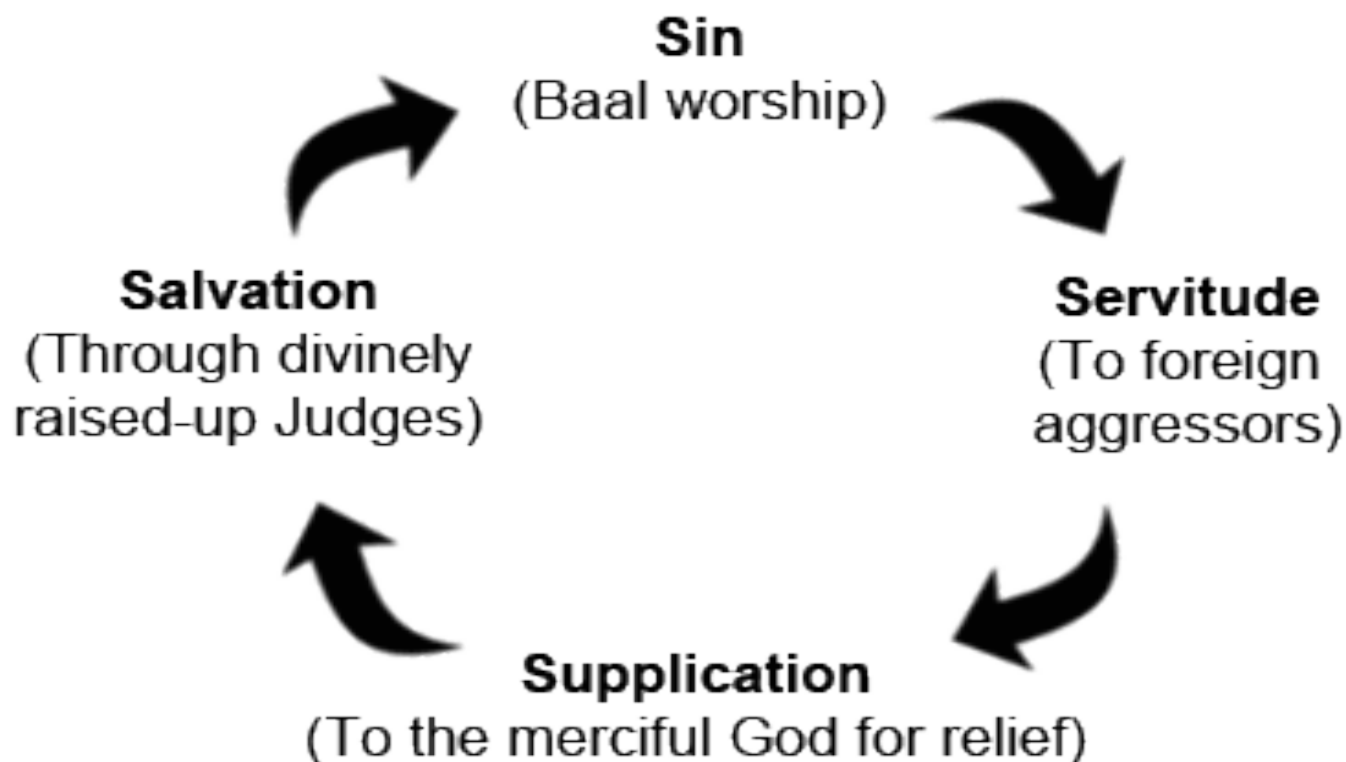
So the LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua the son of Nun, **a man in whom is the Spirit**, and lay your hand on him.

Judges 3:11

So the land had rest forty years.

Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

The Repeated Cycle



Salvation and peace rest on the leadership of God's judge. Othniel is a good judge (the narrative points out no flaws in his character or leadership); the peace is real. But it cannot last, since Othniel does not last. It is only temporary. Cycles of revival throughout church history have been temporary, too. For permanent restoration, and unending peace serving the Lord, God's people need a leader who does not die.

- Tim Keller