

Judges Chapter 4 Part 3

It has been a couple of weeks since our last Wednesday class. So let's review some of the material already covered. Even TV shows do that now. At the beginning of some TV shows, they have scenes from previous episodes to bring you up to speed and perhaps focus your attention on something specific for the current episode.

Outline (based upon Thomas Constable & Robert Dean):

Judges 1:1 – 3:6 The reason for Israel's apostasy

**Judges 3:7 – 16:31 The record of Israel's apostasy
[& God's Deliverance]**

Judges 17:1 – 21:25 The results of Israel's apostasy

As an overview of the second section here is outline of the section based upon a combination of Thomas Constable, J. Vernon McGee and Robert Chisholm.

- A. The first apostasy 3:7-11 [judge: Othniel] 3:7 “The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord,…”
- B. The second apostasy 3:12-31 [judge: Ehud] 3:12 “Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.”
- C. **The third apostasy chapters 4—5 [judge: Deborah and Barak] 4:1 “Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord…”**
- D. The fourth apostasy 6:1—10:5 [judge: Gideon] 6:1 “Then the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.”
- E. The fifth apostasy 10:6—12:15 [judge: Jephthah] 10:6 “Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord,…”
- F. The sixth apostasy chapters 13—16 [judge: Samson] 13:1 “Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord,…”

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Here is an outline of Judges chapter 4 from Thomas Constable who shows us a chiastic structure:

A The sons of Israel are oppressed (vv. 1-3).

B Deborah, the prophetess, is featured (vv. 4-9).

C Barak and Sisera call out (vv. 10-13).

D Yahweh is Israel's warrior (v. 14a).

C' Barak and Sisera go down (vv. 14b-16).

B' Jael, wife of Heber, is featured (vv. 17-22).

A' Jabin, king of Canaan, is subdued (vv. 23-24).¹

Previously, it was mentioned that Samson was one of the strongest types of Christ in the Bible. That from Herman. Then we saw that Ehud's exploits could remind us of the two advents of Christ: one as a sacrifice on the cross and the second as a victorious warrior defeating an army hostile to Israel. So, I want to pick up on that theme a bit before delving back into chapter 4.

The names of the books of the Bible are not inspired, for the most part. It is true that Jews take the first word of a book of the Torah to name that book. Genesis is called "Bereshith." Our version of the name comes from the Vulgate, the Latin translation accomplished by Jerome. Per Thomas Constable:

The Latin title came from the Septuagint translation (the Greek translation of the Old Testament made about 300 years before Christ). "Genesis" is a transliteration of the Greek word *geneseos*, the Greek word that translates the Hebrew *toledot*. This Hebrew word is the key word in identifying the structure of Genesis, and the translators have usually rendered it "account" or "generations" (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2).¹

When we come to the book of Judges, the name may be a misnomer.

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From Thomas Constable:

The English title, "Judges," comes to us from the Latin translation (Vulgate), which the Greek translation (Septuagint) influenced. In all three languages, the title means "judges." This title is somewhat misleading, however, because most English-speaking people associate the modern concept of a "judge" with Israel's "judges." As we shall see, judges then were very different from judges now. The Hebrew title is also "Judges" (Shophetim). The book received its name from its principal characters, as the Book of Joshua did.

But, the principal characters are either identified as "deliverers" and/or delivered the sons of Israel from slavery to a foreign power. This slavery has two components: a physical earthly component and a spiritual heavenly component. The spiritual slavery is something they willingly did by worshipping the Baals and Ashtoreth, gods of wood and stone. This led to their enslavement to foreign powers. Keep in mind that the Hebrew word for "deliverer" can also mean in English, "savior." Although the title might be politically incorrect, "Book of Saviors," might be a more pertinent title.

But, such a title causes one to compare each individual savior against the actions of THE Savior.

THE Savior has a 1st advent in which he is sacrificed as judgement for the penalty of sin and a 2nd advent at the beginning of which He saves or delivers Israel from foreign powers.

We already saw that Ehud "sacrificed" Eglon. The words used in that narrative are the same words used in Leviticus in a sacrificial setting. The book of Hebrews makes it clear that Jesus is the sacrifice that satisfies the Law. His sacrifice propitiates or satisfies the Justice of God the Father. After the "sacrifice" of Eglon, Ehud leads the successful battle against the Moabites.

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Back to the “Book of Saviors.” Is it possible to draw parallels or correspondences from each of the “saviors” to The Savior? Is there a typology evident here?

One more detour before reviewing the previous lesson. Let me introduce the characters found in chapter 4:

Let’s look at the list of characters we are going to read about. There is information about each character that suggests a need to compare one against another, especially Deborah compared to each of the other characters. She is like a literary foil, a character against which another character or characters are compared.

Name	Role(s)	Action	Location
Deborah	Woman Prophetess	Judging Prophecy	Debra’s Palm Tree Btwn Bethel & Ramah
Barak	(man)	Drag & Take (troops)	Kedesh of Naphtali Mount Tabor
Jabin	King	Reigning	Hazor
Sisera	Commander	(commanding)	Harosheth Hagoim
Heber	Kenite man	Separated	Terebinth Tree near Zaananim
Jael	Woman (of Heber)	Kill	Tent of Heber

Judges 4:1 Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, after Ehud died.

Again. The first word in the Hebrew. But it is not an adverb. It is the same verb found in Judges 3:12 and means “they continued.” They continued to do evil. An echo from Judges 3:12 and pointing back to the paradigm in Judges chapter 2. Interesting use of the word. By repeating it here after using it in chapter 3, it ties the two chapters together through the thread of “evil,” and then back to the paradigm. The Fabric of Scripture. It also emphasizes the continuing pattern of sin.

The sons of Israel did evil:

Judges 2:11 (paradigm) → 3:7 (Othniel) → 3:12 (Ehud) → 4:1 (Barak)
evil evil Again evil Again evil

Sight. Literally “eyes” but instead of plural it is the “dual,” meaning two. In other words, in the two eyes of God.

After Ehud died. Literally, “And Ehud was dead,” or “And Ehud had died.” The Hebrew word translated “after” by the NASB is multi-functional. It can be translated with many different words. After is an OK translation in this context. This is included at the beginning of this narrative in chapter 4 rather than at the ending of chapter 3 where you would have expected it. The author is again playing with words. He is emphasizing here that the sons of Israel lacked a physical human leader. They still rejected God as their king. So when the previous judge died, everyone went back to doing what was good in their own eyes which was sin.

There is something similar in the New Testament in John chapter 5.

Jesus performs a miracle and heals a lame man. The reader thinks, how can that be bad. Then the writer drops a bomb:

John 5:9 ...Now it was a Sabbath on that day.

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Saying, “And Ehud had died.” is like that. You think ya ya ya, the sons of Israel are at it again. Why? Because they didn’t have a physical leader. God is their king but He is not visible. They have to have faith. Remember the Thomas episode in John 20? We will visit that passage in a little bit. Just a hint at what is to come.

Judges 4:2 So the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; and the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim.

We already read Joshua 11:1-11.

Jabin. There was a previous king of Canaan named Jabin. Quite possibly, he was a descendant named for the original Jabin. Joshua defeated the first Jabin. Yet, here, Jabin’s forces defeat Israel.

Sold them. This is actually mentioned in the paradigm in chapter 2. But this is also a word that links to another action in this chapter.

Here are uses of “sold” so far in Judges:

Judges 2:14 (paradigm) → 3:8 (Othniel) → 4:2 (Barak) → 4:9 (Jael)

King ...reigned. King and reigned are from the same Hebrew root. The writer could have just said he was king. Instead, he added that he reigned. The emphasis causes us to revisit the Israelite’s need for a physical ruler. They are walking by sight, not by faith. King Jabin commanded and his subjects obeyed. And that includes the sons of Israel. That is what they are crying to God about. He has enslaved them. But, the reason they are enslaved to Jabin is that they first rejected their covenant God and enslaved themselves to the Canaanite deities of wood and stone. Back to that phrase, “There was no king in Israel.” They had rejected their God, the real God. But their God was not visible. That is the point of saying Ehud had died. They seem unable to handle the incredible freedom of not

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having a physical king over them. And even when they have a Hebrew king over them, unless that king is enforcing the commands of the covenant, they wander off into idolatry. I am saving the Thomas episode for later, but it is coming.

Hazor. This is a town in the north of Israel.

According to Thomas Constable:

“As long as Ehud lived, he kept Israel faithful to God (v. 1). However, after he died, God's people again "did evil," and turned from the Lord. In discipline, God allowed the Canaanites in the North to gain strength and dominate the Israelites for 20 years. The earlier oppressions were from outside Canaan, but now a leader within Canaan led an uprising against the Israelites. "Hazor," one of the largest cities in the Promised Land, again became the center of Canaanite power in this area. It had formerly organized a coalition of forces to fight against Joshua (cf. Josh. 11:1, 10). It stood on the main road connecting Egypt and Mesopotamia.”

Jabin. His name means "The Discerning," lit. "he will understand" per Thomas Constable.

Commander of his army. This introduces the main “bad guy.” King Jabin is in charge, but the guy that gets the job done is the commander of the army. In David’s day that was Joab.

He lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. The second part of this place name is actually “the nations.” According to Thomas Constable it means, “The Woodlands of the Nations.” Interesting that the army headquarters where Sisera lives is located in a different place than where the king lives. There is some indication that the army was actually a coalition of forces based upon agreement with king Jabin and/or Sisera. The word “hagoyim” can be translated the gentiles. Interesting to note there is another place “of the Gentiles.” I would have missed this but Chris read part of Isaiah chapter 9:

Isaiah 9:1b ...In earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He will make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

Interesting. In Judges 4, the troops that respond are from Zebulun and Naphtali. Galilee of the Gentiles is in the same area as the “Forest of the Gentiles.” Nazareth is in this area. Interesting.

Sisera. The main “bad guy.”

Judges 4:3 The sons of Israel cried out to the Lord; for he had nine hundred iron chariots, and he oppressed the sons of Israel severely for twenty years.

Cried out. This is not the same word used previously in the book of Judges (3:9, 3:15). But it is one of the two words used by Moses (Exodus 5:8,15; 8:12; 14:10,15; 15:25; 17:4; 22:23,27). The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT) says, “The major emphasis of the basic meaning of the root sq/zq falls on the loud and agonized “crying” of someone in acute distress, calling for help and seeking deliverance with this emotion-laden utterance.” And again, “The crying is thus a call for help in distress, which has as its goal immediate assistance in affliction and oppression.”

He had nine hundred iron chariots. The sons of Israel did not yet have iron technology. So, their weapons were not a match against those kingdoms that did have this technology. Previously, this did not matter when they were trusting God. From a human sin nature perspective, this was an impossible hurdle. **Iron chariots**. They are walking by sight and not by faith. But with any technology, it has a weakness.

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Oppressed severely. Another echo from the Exodus generation.

From Trent Butler:

“The description of this oppression suggests it was more severe than those that preceded it. In the Othniel narrative Cushan-Rishathaim never appears as the subject of a verb; we are simply told that the Lord sold his people into the king’s hands and that Israel then served the king (3:8). The Ehud narrative, in addition to attributing the oppression to the Lord and noting that Israel served Eglon, attributes hostile actions to the Moabite king, but stops short of actually using a verb meaning “oppress” (3:13-14). However, this narrative specifically declares that Sisera “cruelly oppressed” Israel for a period of twenty years (which is longer than either of the earlier oppressions). The verb used (Hebrew) also appears in the Exodus account (Exod. 3:9), suggesting that Sisera’s treatment of Israel was on a par with Pharaoh’s. The adverb “cruelly” (Hebrew, literally, “with force”) emphasizes the severity of the oppression, while the reference to nine hundred iron chariots conjures up a rather terrifying mental image and suggests the apparent invincibility of the oppressor.”

The constant references or hints to the Exodus serves to remind the reader of the great deliverance by God on behalf of the sons of Israel. There is yet a great deliverance by God on behalf of the sons of Israel at the end of the Tribulation. How do you jog a believer’s memory to the grace of God? You continually remind Him of what God has already done. If God has already done the greater for you in salvation, do you think He will withhold the lesser blessings in time? That is, if you will only trust Him.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will

of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2 is the antidote to living in Canaan. Judges is illustrating that prescription. Walk by faith in God, not by sight and not by faith in the world. Cursed is the man who trusteth in man.

**Jeremiah 17:5 This is what the Lord says:
“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength, And whose
heart turns away from the Lord.**

Now for the delivering force.

Judges 4:4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

Deborah. Her name literally means “bee.” So say the commentaries and dictionaries. But, if you know some Hebrew, you know that most words are derived from a tri-literal root. Sometimes a word, just looking at it in text, could be derived from two or more different roots. So the student has to sort out which one. Here, there is some ambiguity introduced into the text. As Thomas Constable observes, “However, her name also suggests her prophetic role as she spoke to Barak, since the consonants in her name are the same as those in the Hebrew word translated “speak” and “word.” Often a prophet will say that, “the Word (DaBaR) came to me saying...” Here then could be another “concealment” of the messages from God, in Deborah’s name. The Bible reveals; the Bible conceals.

Wife. Most translations get this wrong. The word for woman is used twice in the Hebrew. Most translations skip over the first use. The second use would literally be the woman (wife) of Lappidoth. But the first use emphasizes that she is a woman. Literally, “And Deborah, a woman...”

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She is the one who is doctrinally oriented. She has the connection with God through the gift of prophecy. The men have deviated from the Word.

There is a true story told to me by a friend about a meeting in a Middle Eastern country many years ago. There were two Muslim Air Force colonels from the Middle Eastern country, two American men representing the US Air Force and a female USAF Major from the Pentagon at a conference table. My friend was also there. He spoke Arabic. But the Muslim colonels did not know that. The reason for the meeting was the purchase by the colonels of US hardware. The two Muslim colonels are conversing between themselves. The first colonel says the two American men are just after their money. “And,” he says emphatically, “they brought a woman with them.” The other colonel asserts, “But she is the smart one.”

So here in Judges chapter 4, the woman is the smart one. She is a prophetess by the will of God. There are no men available to fill this role. In this chapter, there are role reversals. The women step in to fulfil roles that men seem unable to do. Wait until we get to chapter 5 when we learn that some of the tribes refused to help Barak free the sons of Israel from the slavery to Jabin.

Lappidoth. There is a question here. Is this a placename or a man’s name? Could be translated as “torches.” So Deborah could be a woman of torches. Per Robert Chisholm, he says: “Taking it as an abstract noun/attributive genitive, one could then translate the phrase “fiery one” or “spirited woman.” He considers the Hebrew favors translating this as wife of Lappidoth. Here is that ambiguity again.

Prophetess. She had the gift of prophet but not the office per Robbie Dean. She communicates information from God. But, she is not engaged in teaching Scripture.

Judging. Again, she is functioning as a judge. Typically, this would be a man per Exodus 18:21.

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According to Thomas Constable there were two other women prophetesses in the Old Testament: Miriam (Exod. 15:20) and Huldah (2 Kings 22:14). We saw Huldah in connection with Josiah when we were reading Zephaniah.

Judges 4:5 She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel went up to her for judgment.

Sit. Same root as “lived” in Judges 3:2 when “Sisera lived in ...”

Here is Robbie Dean’s comment on verse 5:

"She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel," now the reason he calls it "the palm tree of Deborah" is because of the fact that she had sat there, by the time the writer writes this this had become the name of that location, "the palm tree of Deborah," and it was standard operating procedure in the ancient world that if you were a judge or if you were a prophetess then you would usually set up your place of operations in a grove of trees, a grove of palm trees, a grove of oak trees was typical in the Canaanite fertility worship so she is in a grove of palm trees and there she is adjudicating personal conflicts and legal conflicts in the nation. It is "between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment."

Judges 4:6 Now she sent word and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali, and said to him, “The Lord, the God of Israel, has indeed commanded, ‘Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from the sons of Naphtali and from the sons of Zebulun.

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She sent *word* and summoned. “Word,” is in italics meaning it is not in the Hebrew text. She sent (as on a mission) and called (summoned). This summoning is the same word used of the calling of Samuel (1 Samuel chapter 3). Othniel and Ehud were commissioned. For Othniel, he was “raised up” or commissioned a deliverer in Judges 3:9. Ehud was “raised up” or commissioned a deliverer in Judges 3:15. Here, God uses an intermediary, Deborah, who was a prophetess to “call” Barak. His calling was an appointment, a commission. He responded in faith.

As a sidenote, there was a modern day Prime Minister of Israel (10th Prime Minister 1999-2001) named Ehud Barak. Ehud was a judge. Barak was a judge.

Commanded. This word is in the intensive Hebrew piel. Deborah received this from God directly. But the way it is worded would suggest that Barak may have already known this.

Go. The Masoretic (Hebrew text) says “go.” But the LXX (Alexandrinus manuscript) says “to you.” The original Hebrew was written without vowel points. So, the word was ambiguous except in a context. Here it is more than likely “go.” The ambiguity gives the word some emphasis. You might first read “to you.” This is apparently what the translators of the LXX did. Then you realize it is “to go.” The ambiguity emphasizes what is not there. This is for you Barak. What are you waiting for?

March. This writer often, when describing forces going into battle, uses two words. But here, God uses three words. The first word, go, is from the word to go, to walk. We just covered that one. The word “march,” can apparently mean march, deploy, since the NASB so translates it here. But the basic meaning is to draw, drag or pull. It is used when Joseph is pulled out of a pit in which his brothers put him. Did Barak have to argue with the tribal chieftains, cajole them into going. Did he have to “drag” them out of their “slave” routine to fight for their freedom?

Genesis 37:28 Midianite traders passed by, and they pulled Joseph up out of the cistern. They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

It is interesting that it can also mean to draw out sound like blowing on the ram's horn (Joshua 6:5). God is giving military orders to Barak via Deborah. He responded in faith. The word for faith is not found in the passage. But Barak receives instructions from God via Deborah. He obeyed the instructions.

Take. This word is not used previously in Judges for moving forces. It is used for picking up a dagger, for taking women as wives, etc. These words do not expect enthusiasm on the part of the sons of Israel. Go, drag, take.

The implication is that the sons of Israel might be a little hesitant to go to battle against a superior force with superior weapons including iron chariots. The sons of Israel are living in the Bronze Age but the Canaanites are living in the Iron Age. And, 20 years ago this is the force that beat them and enslaved them. From a human, walk by sight mentality, this is a sure ticket to death.

Naphtali and Zebulun. A logical question would be why only the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun? Barak was from Naphtali so that is understandable. Zebulun was nearby. But so were other tribes. We will have to wait until chapter 5 for a definitive answer.

It would appear from the vocabulary that the sons of Israel were loath to go to war.

Judges 4:7 I will draw out to you Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his many troops to the river Kishon, and I will hand him over to you.'"

Draw out. This is from the same root as the command God gave Barak to march or deploy troops (in the NASB). But as we saw, it's root meaning is to draw, drag or pull. The first time I read this, it made me think of a chess board. But God is doing this for real. This is a military operation and God is the strategist. He is the strategist for the sons of Israel while at the same time able to motivate the enemy to move exactly where God wants them.

The river Kishon. This is a wadi. Per Robbie Dean, more than likely, this is the dry season. During the dry season, the river dries up. It becomes a perfect place for chariots to maneuver and fight. So, this is not the rainy season and no rain is anticipated. Rain could turn the dry lakebed into a sea of mud or worse. This would greatly hinder iron chariots.

Also, please note that this is the area in which Armageddon will be fought. Ummm, coincidence?

I will hand him over to you. Literally, "I will give him into your hand." God has guaranteed success. This is from a spiritual perspective. And there is our word "natan" in the Hebrew, the word "to give." God says, "I will give him into your hand." Deborah is providing information from God. The decision from Barak's perspective is do I believe the prophetess, the messenger from God, or do I believe my eyes. Do I walk by faith or do I walk by sight? From man's perspective, what God says is not possible. Do you believe in something that is not possible from a woman who is getting information from God who I cannot see? Or do I

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believe my eyes which tell me if I do what God says, I and 10,000 sons of Israel will be slaughtered?

His reasoning might have gone something like this, “You want me to convince 10,000 sons of Israel who are mere farmers armed with bow and arrow and bronze swords or maybe farm implements to go against a 10 to 1 or 5 to 1 superior force that is highly trained, well armed with technology that we do not yet have and expect them to win? What military academy did you go to Deborah?” And of course, Deborah has only to say, “Didn’t GOD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the God of Moses just COMMAND you to do this? And, ahead of time, He guarantees your success. It is time Barak to step up to the plate and operate on faith!”

Barak probably had heard the story of the Exodus at the Passover feast. God killed all the Egyptians that attacked the sons of Israel. And they didn’t have any army. God did it by Himself.

So why does God need any sons of Israel to fight against the Canaanites? Actually, this is a good question.

With the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, may I suggest three answers, or better, three reasons why God did this. After all, He did in fact not need the sons of Israel to vanquish the Canaanites. Later Gideon is more of an observer in his battle with the enemy of the sons of Israel. So why did God need troops on the field? Why indeed?

May I suggest three reasons: 1) the most obvious reason, 2) the most important reason and 3) the most unexpected and perhaps a runner-up for the most important.

Why did God send 10,000 sons of Israel to fight the Canaanites?

1. Most Obvious: Learn war.

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- a. God said He left Canaanites in the land so the sons of Israel would be taught war. The verses from chapter 3 says that they be taught war. First time around, I interpreted the verses to say to learn war. In the simple form of the Qal in the Hebrew, it usually means learn. But in the Piel, intensive form, as in chapter 3, it is often translated “teach.” So, if I go back to the word “taught,” who is going to teach them? Now, the only answer I can come up with is, God.

Here is an interesting summary on this word from the Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT):

“The predominating idea is that God is the ultimate teacher. In the earliest period he is viewed as the teacher of any special skill. In time, however, this view shifted to one of God as the teacher of the Torah and of all the regulations applying to ethical and cultic life. He was the source of all instruction concerning these vital questions. This also meant, however, that he was the teacher of all wisdom, and was the only one capable of mediating this insight into the heavenly mysteries.”

Judges 3:1 Now these are the nations that the Lord left, to test Israel by them (that is, all the Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan;

Judges 3:2 only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it formerly).

- b. When we came across these verses in Judges chapter 3, I just taught what was there. But, my thought was how are they supposed to learn war if they didn't have a standing army, once they are enslaved by various kingdoms?

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- c. If God is the teacher and they are to be taught, how did He do that? Look at the text. With each deliverance there is a different tactic used. God slowly gave them different tactics to use.
- i. In the Othniel narrative, the defeat of the enemy is described in a vanilla way. God “gave into his hand” the enemy and he “prevailed.”
 - ii. In the Ehud narrative, Ehud first kills the king (cut off the head of the snake) and then deal with the enemy by blocking his escape and encircling him.
 - iii. In the Barak narrative, God turns the advantage of iron chariots into a disadvantage by using terrain and weather.
 - iv. In the Gideon narrative, which we have not yet dealt with, God instructs the sons of Israel to use deception.

So, with each narrative, God provides a new and different tactic which the sons of Israel are taught. Did they learn? Maybe not. But I suspect there was one person in Israel who did learn from these narratives: David. So much for the “most obvious” reason for sending 10,000 troops into battle. Maybe someone would remember the lessons taught.

2. Most Important: Witnessing the Work of God on behalf of the sons of Israel.
- a. Previously mentioned in our study was the importance of tombs of the “judges.” The key issue is memory. What did God do for Israel? Witnesses pass on this memory in written form as in the book of Judges and in tradition by word of mouth from warrior to child and neighbor.
 - b. Also mentioned, is that God repeatedly reminds the sons of Israel about what He did during the Exodus. The Torah which is read

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during the feasts, the Passover in particular, each year. It is mentioned in Judges 2:1.

- c. And with each deliverance, there are witnesses that can pass on the information to following generations. Not only that, I suspect there were foreigners who travelled through Israel from time to time and picked up information. It is suspected by some that Greeks picked up the concept of a loose confederation of tribes in Israel as a model to be used in Greece. Witness to what God did.

There is application for us.

- d. Each one of us should at some point witness God's working in our lives, in our church, in our families, in our nation. We witnessed that. Now we can tell, witness, to others what God has done. For the Risley family, they give the gospel. Then a new believer, so delighted in what he found in believing in Jesus witnesses or tells a neighbor about what he found, what God did in his life, even if that was only for a few minutes. And in eternity, there are rewards for walking by faith. We share in God's glory because He worked through us.

3. Most Unexpected: Fellowship with God.

- a. You are possibly looking at me with furrowed brow and saying, "Come on Kit. Are you saying that in war you can have fellowship with God?" And yes that is exactly what I am saying. You may think fellowship is drinking a beer with a buddy on your back porch. But what does the Bible say about fellowship.
- b. When I started studying the book of 1st John, I ran across the Greek word for fellowship. There was a master's thesis I read on that word. There are two main concepts associated with fellowship as it concerns God: a) participation and b) sharing.

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- c. Rather than have a long drawn out study of these words, let me cut to the chase. In each of these wars to regain independence, the fighters fight as fulfilling God's will. God guaranteed success. But, he used men that were, even for a short period of time, willing to trust Him. As such they participated in God's outworking of history. They participated. They were in fellowship with God. When we walk by faith, we participate in God's outworking of history and have fellowship with Him.
- d. At the end of the battle, having participated in the victory, they shared in the glory. The issue of glory will come up in a verse or two.
- e. There is perhaps one more item to consider under fellowship that applies to us. I have to go to work. I have to go to the store. My physical body does the work. But, if I am walking by faith dependence on the Holy Spirit, I am in fellowship with God and participating in His plan and will share in eternity with Jesus Christ rewards and glory.

All that out of 10,000 troops commanded to oppose a superior force on a battlefield more than 3,000 years ago.