Therefore, Stand

Judges 3:7-31

Introduction:

God does not always use the most obvious person.

At the end of the time of the Judges, Israel wanted a king like all of the nations around them. Samuel said, “God is your King,” but that did not suit the people.

The People’s King was Saul.

So, finally God gave them a king of their own choosing, Saul. God pointed him out to Samuel, but it was the people who had demanded a King. He was head and shoulders above than any man is Israel, a fine specimen of a man.

God’s King was David. (I Samuel 16)

When Samuel was sent to Jesse’s house to anoint a king, Jesse showed Samuel 7 sons. Samuel chose none of them. Finally they brought in David, a “ruddy, good-looking” boy. Samuel said, “He is the one” God said, “…man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”

God is not stuck on one pattern for His leaders. The world produces uniformity, God produces individuality.

In chapter three we’re going to meet three judges whom God uses to deliver Israel. They are Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar, not exactly household names.

In verses 7-31 we will learn from these three Judges five principles to help us be Godly people in a godless society. The first way is to:

I. Stand for Something – 3:7-9

A. Participating in a Godly Family

Othniel was the younger brother of Caleb. His extended families lived with or near each other.

What were family gatherings like?

Did they tell of Caleb’s exploits?

Maybe he shared some of his own.

Caleb was one of two men in the whole nation who believed God’s promise to take the nation into Canaan.

In Numbers 14:24 God said about him.

“ But My servant ﻿﻿Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and ﻿﻿has followed Me fully”

B. Patterning After a Godly Family

It isn’t enough to participate in a Godly family, we have to determine to pattern our lives after that example.

Othniel obviously did that.

II. Take a stand

God sold them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; And they served him 8 years.

God sent a judge to deliver them, Othniel.

A. He was a Proven Man.

Judges 1:12-13

﻿“Then Caleb said, “Whoever attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give my daughter Achsah as wife.” And Othniel the son of Kenaz, ﻿﻿Caleb’s younger brother, took it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah as wife.”

B. He Was a Proper Judge

1. He went to war Cushan-Rishathaim.

2. The Lord delivered Cushan into his hand.

3. Israel had rest for 40 years.

III. Make God Your Stand – 3:10

Though Othniel was a man of faith and courage he still needed the power of the Holy Spirit.

“The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel.”

A. The Difference Between the Old and New Testaments.

In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit did not indwell believers.

In John 14:17 Jesus told the disciples,

“the Spirit of truth, ﻿﻿whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you ﻿﻿and will be in you.”

He enters the believer at the time of salvation and remains in him/her until the rapture of the church, when the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth [II Thessalonians 2:7] (prior to the tribulation) and (because we cannot be dis-indwelt) we will go with Him.

Note: There is no such thing as a believer who does not have the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:9

“But ﻿﻿if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

So, in the Old Testament He had to come upon them to empower them. In the New Testament He already lives in the believer and He empowers from within.

B. In Both Testaments the Power of the Holy Spirit is Needed.

Zechariah wrote in 6:4

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

Also, Isaiah 40:29-31

“He gives power to the weak, and to *those who have* no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who ﻿﻿wait on the Lord ﻿﻿shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.’

Jesus said, “without Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

IV. “Here I stand” – 3:12-30

When I think of the word “Stand” I think of Martin Luther. It will soon be Halloween. In 1517 on the night before all souls day, (now our Halloween) he posted 95 theses on the door of the Wittenberg Catholic Church. At that time he said, “Here I stand, God help me, I can do no other”

That might be a slogan that Ehud would use.

﻿“And the children of Israel 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 of the Lord. Then he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and ﻿﻿Amalek, went and ﻿﻿defeated Israel, and took possession of ﻿﻿the City of Palms. So the children of Israel ﻿﻿served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years.

A. Cast of Characters

1. Eglon - He was an obese man. (v.17). Fat calf – circuit.

2. Moab - Lot’s son by incest with his older daughter.

3. Ammon - Lot’s son by incest with his younger daughter (Genesis 19).

4. Ehud – a Benjamite (Genesis 35:18)

His mother, Rachel wanted to call him

Ben-oni – son of my sorrow

Jacob said, “No, he will be called

Benjamin, Son of my right hand.

5. He was left-handed (Was considered a negative).

Latin – sinister = left

Dexterous= right

Welch – left= strange

Danish – left-handed work is sloppy.

So, he was a left-handed son of the right hand. We will see that he turned it into a positive.

6. He delivered the tribute payments to Eglon.

Question:

How would you go about defeating the Moabites?

Probably the best way would be to kill the King.

Good luck on that one. But, that was the plan of Ehud.

B. The Courage of Ehud

1. He made a dagger - a cubit in length (18 inches long).

2. He concealed it on his right thigh.

3. He sent out the ones who had come with him.

4. He told Eglon, “I have a message from God”

5. Eglon said, Keep silent” and sent his attendants away.

6. Ehud pulled the dagger from his thigh and thrust it into the belly of Eglon.

Note: it went all the way in.

7. Ehud locked the door to the upper room.

8. The attendants found the door locked so they did not go in. “He is probably attending to his needs”

9. Finally they become embarrassed and unlock the door, go in and find him dead.

10. Ehud escapes, blows a trumpet in the mountains of Ephraim. The Israelites came to him and he led them to victory.

11. They controlled the fords that lead to Moab and killed every Moabite who tried to go home, 10.000 of them.

12. The land had rest for 80 years.

V. Stand with what you have - 3:31

Shamgar gets one verse.

How much can we learn from one verse?

1. He was really a nobody. Probably no pretension here.

2. He may have been a farmer. So, he was probably strong.

3. He had a crude weapon. But he knew how to use it.

So, he used what he had.

Moses told the Lord, “I am not able to do this job”

What was God’s answer?

What is that in your hand?

It’s only a staff!

That staff became a serpent before Pharaoh and swallowed all of the serpents that the Egyptians had made.

The Nile was turned into blood.

Frogs covered the land of Egypt.

The dust was turned to gnats.

Locust came on the land.

The Red Sea opened up for the Israelites.

It closed on the Egyptians.

Shamgar had an ox goad - 10-15 feet with a prod on one end and a piece of metal on the other. With one end you prod the Ox, with the other you clean the plow.

It was a harmless tool, like a staff, but Shamgar killed 600 Philistines with it.

What is that in your hand?

Oh, its nothing. Are you sure?

It is what God has given you for use in His Service. Little is much when God is in it. Labor not for wealth or fame. There’s a crown and you can win it, if you go in Jesus’ name.

Conclusion: Therefore, Stand.

We live in a post-Christian world.

The church has gone from being the preferred religion to being the deferred religion.

Friday was my father’s birthday. He was 114 years old. His body died when he was 83. He was a veteran of W.W. I. In 1934 those veterans erected a simple memorial in the Mohave Desert as a remembrance of their corades who had fallen in that “war to end all wars.” It was a simple cross on a hill.

Last week the A.C.L.U. placed a piece of plywood front and back on that cross. They plan to tear it down.

Why would they do that? Because it is a religious symbol and we can’t have that away out there in the middle of the desert.

If the truth be known, it is not because it is a religious symbol – it is because it is a Christian symbol.

That is what we have come to in this late-great “bastion of freedom.”

I have read the last chapters of last book of The Book and it won’t get any better.

We will be called on to take our stand along with men like Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar.

We must be ready to:

Stand for Something

Take a Stand

Make God out Stand

Say, “Here I Stand”

Stand with what we have.