Oct 18, 2026

Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

An Unlikely Deliverer
Judges 3:15-23, 30

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Perhaps it feels like you've been waiting forever for something to change, for a new direction in your career, for a relationship to be restored, for the willpower to break a bad habit, or for deliverance from a difficult situation

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
God, sometimes it's hard to wait. But we trust in You and in Your deliverance. Please give us patience, and allow Your greatness and glory to be evident in our lives

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer
(Ps 4:1 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 23, 2020)

Series: Generations: From Canaan to Jerusalem

UNIT 2: From Settled People to Judges

NEXT WEEK
A Lack of Instruction
(Judges 17:1-6; 18:18-19, 27)

Lesson Background and Introduction

Joshua 5:13-12:8 details the Israelites' military exploits in taking possession of the land that God promised; this was in accordance with God's instructions in Deuteronomy 20:16-17. But even after the Israelites defeated thirty-one kings (Joshua 12:24), the Lord cautioned that there was much more to conquer (Joshua 13:1-17). The caution became an accusation in Judges 1:1-2:3, as the narrative describes a mixture of success and failure. At a place called Bokim (meaning "weeping"), the angel of the Lord reminded the Israelites that their failure to finish the conquest amounted to disobedience (Judges 2:2). The long-term result of the Israelites' disobedience was a repeated need—over more than three hundred years!—for strong leaders to be deliverers because of a cyclical pattern of sin. As noted in Lesson 6, the resulting "sin cycles" were characterized by the four-stage sequence of duplicity, disaster, distress, and deliverance. The first recorded deliverer-judge was Othniel, who served forty years in that capacity (Judges 3:7-11). His time frame was perhaps 1373 to 1334 BC. But after his death, the Israelites needed another savior. The Israelites found themselves subjugated by King Eglon of Moab. With help from his neighboring allies, the Ammonites and Amalekites, King Eglon ruled over a portion of the territory of Benjamin and the region assigned to the tribe of Reuben. Eglon's base of power was "the City of Palms"—that is, Jericho (compare Deuteronomy 34:3; Judges 1:16). We speculate that he set up court there to better keep an eye on the Israelites, whom he oppressed for eighteen years.

King Eglon fell to a single blow without struggle, the fatal stroke made by a man he failed to perceive as a threat. The secret "message" was a verdict of judgment executed by Israel's deliverer: the oppression of God's people was terminated. Although the Israelites once again had done evil in God's sight, when they cried to Him in their misery, He faithfully answered (Judges 3:12, 15). Ehud's proficiency with his left hand especially positioned him in this situation. He faithfully honed his unique talents and bravely used them when God asked him to move on Israel's behalf. Ehud's story, like all of Israel's judges, illustrates the cycle God's people repeated time and time again after the era of Joshua's leadership. Through the judges, God showcases his desire for partnership with humanity. Although God seeks, saves, empowers, and redeems, he often desires to employ people in the process. Sometimes he finds a willing person (example: Isaiah 6:8), sometimes he finds a reluctant person (example: Exodus 4:13), and sometimes he finds no one (Ezekiel 22:30). There is a cliché in Christian circles that says, "God does not call the qualified; he qualifies the called." Sometimes, God prepares people for work they will do long before they know the details. Ehud emerged to solve an eighteen-year-long subjugation. He planned diligently before acting boldly. Waiting upon the Lord is a fundamental exercise of faith, and it can take years before the Lord's solution arrives. In the meantime, we must keep the faith, follow the commands he gives, and trust the work he is doing.

(*Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Deliverance through God's Provision (Judges 3:15-18)

Provision of a deliverer (15)

A deliverer because of cries to God (Ps 50:15)
A deliverer through grace (2 Tim 1:8-9)
A deliverer even when we reach an old age (Isaiah 46:4)
A deliverer that will continue to do so (2 Cor. 1:10)
A deliverer from oppressors (Neh 9:26-27)
A deliverer from the hands of enemies (1 Sam 12:10-11)

Provision of an opportunity (16-17)

God provides opportunities even during temptations (1 Cor 10:13)
Live wisely at every opportunity (Eph 5:15-16)
Make the most of every opportunity (Col 4:5)
Act upon every opportunity with wisdom (Ps 90:12)
Work while the opportunity presents itself (John 9:4)

Deliverance through God's Victory (Judges 3:19-25)

Victory through enticement (19-20)

God sometimes allows enticement (1 Kings 22:19-22)
Man is enticed and influenced by his own evil desires (James 1:14)
A violent man is accustomed to enticement (Prov 16:29)
Enticement to listen to what God has said (Mic 6:9)

Victory through escape (21-23)

Way of escape from temptation (1 Cor 10:13)
Way of escape provided by the Creator (Ps 124:7-8)
Way of escape because God has the Master Plan (Jer 29:11)
Way of escape where we are protected (Num 35:11-13)
Way of escape that can be from unusual sources (Josh 2:15-16)

Deliverance through God's Peace (Judges 3:30)

Peace that God provides (30)

Peace that only God alone can bring (Ps 4:8)
Peace that gives strength to His people (Ps 29:11)
Peace to our borders (Ps 147:14)
Peace that comes as a part of the Kingdom of God (Rom 14:17-18)
Peace that comes from the God of peace (1 Thess 5:23)