

Judges 3- background Joshua 24:14-16 The people had advance warning of what they could look forward to if they proceeded in this behavior.

v. 1-2 each generation needs to be taught war- we are in a war for souls, our children must understand this

v. 3 present day areas of kings left- Palestinians, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq

test Israel to know their own hearts- same choice Joshua gave the people

v.5 in chapter 1 the Canaanites dwelt among Israel, now Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, subtle but important difference

v.6 Simply, their sin was intermarriage with the pagan nations in their midst. – *lesson from Numbers 25*

What *led* to their sin was subtler. First, it was the allowing of pagan territory in their midst. This was dangerous for them and dangerous for us.

Second, *romance* led them into sin. There is nothing wrong with romance, but we have a terrible habit of falling in love with people that we have no real business falling in love with.

Pro 4:23 says *Keep* (literally, *guard* or *protect*) *your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.* If we don't guard our hearts, we can end up in trouble.

they compromised their children- How do we compromise our children? music, movies, culture (we say if they can't be like other kids they'll suffer, rather than if they are like other kids they will suffer,

teach our children to minister to each other- they are in the battle ground together - Stop here and pray for ten and up club and teens in our body to be able to stand

v.7 chose evil and the gods of the world- What do we teach our children with our choices?

v.8 the distress that they were in was a result of their own choices and sin

v.9 When they cried out to the Lord he answered- have we cried out to the Lord and are we ready for Him to answer- Will we do things His way if He does answer?

v.10 raised up Othniel who was a man of war but it was the Spirit of the LORD that came upon him to give victory- see chapter 1: 13-15

notice progression, first judged Israel and then went to war

* *Isaiah 33:22 For the LORD is our judge, The LORD is our lawgiver, The LORD is our King, He will save us.* --- We must have the Lord in all three areas, they co-exist

v.12 cycle repeats and now Israel in bondage for eighteen years until "when they cried out"

a news story told of a grease processing plant that opened up a 55-gallon drum of grease that came from a prison. Inside, they found a little bit of grease, but a dead prison inmate. He tried to escape by hiding in the barrel, but his quest for freedom became a means of bondage and death for him. He was deceived like we are deceived by sin, thinking that it can be a path to freedom. Instead, it only brings bondage and death.

v.15 Ehud was an unlikely candidate for the job- he had little use of his right hand

He used double edged sword- *Hebrews 4:12 For the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*

v.19 Ehud turned away from the stone images at Gilgal- possibly idol markers set up by Joshua's twelve stones, quarries

He had a message from God for the king

Shamgar- oxgoad was about 8 feet long- about six inches diameter on large end- a point on one end to goad the ox and a paddle on the other to clean the plow Two edged sword?

God uses unlikely people

* Apostles- Calvary pastors- this ministry- Balaam's donkey- Esther- Ruth/Boaz- boy with loaves and fishes

God uses unlikely weapons

ox goad- rod of Moses- stone of David

needle and thread of Dorcas (Acts 9)-

We can't look at who we are or what we have, it is God's mercy and grace that accomplish anything. We are unlikely people, and don't have great weapons, but we need to look at what has God called us to , what do we have and go for it

Its not the weapon or the person holding it. Its a message from God