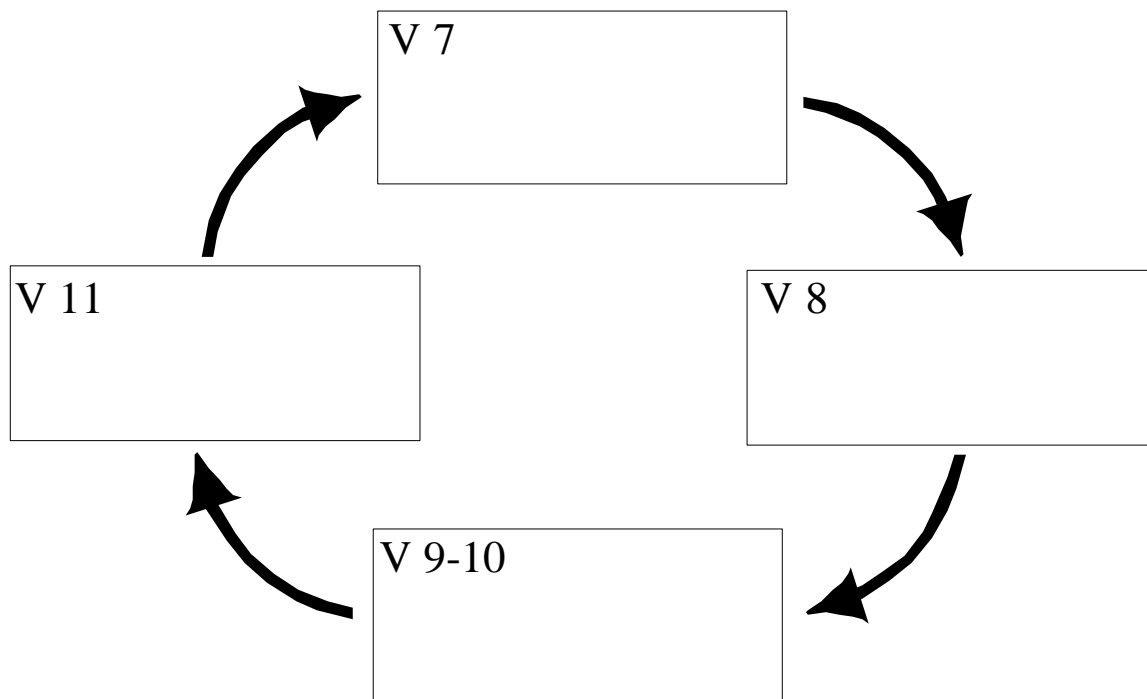


Othniel and Ehud

Judges 3:7-31

Read Judges 3:7-11

1. Outline the events of the Othniel story



2. What do we already know about Othniel (see Judges 1:12-13)? Is he the kind of guy you'd choose to be a judge?



3. Cushan-rishathaim means Cushan of ‘double evil.’ Look at a more literal translation of the story below. What strikes you?

Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, so that He sold them into the hands of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the sons of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. 9 When the sons of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel to deliver them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

Why do you think the name Cushan-rishathaim is repeated so often?

Othniel, with his family connections and proven military prowess is a typical all-Israelite hero. He defeats a typical enemy, the aptly named pagan king Cushan double-evil.

Read Judges 3:12-30

5. Why does Israel get into trouble again?

6. What is the first thing we learn about Ehud (v 15)?

7. In Hebrew, left handed is literally ‘restricted in the use of his right hand.’ What would this mean for Ehud’s ability to lead Israel in Battle?

8. What job Ehud is sent to do, Do the Israelites see him as a military leader (v 15b)?

9. From Ehud’s method of defeating the enemy, what kind of words would you use to describe his character?

9. How does Ehud compare with Othniel?

Compared with the heroic Othniel, the disabled and deceptive Ehud seems an unlikely choice as judge, but God uses him to get the job done.

10. Can you think of any other examples of God’s preference for using unlikely heroes to deliver his people (have a look at Matt 27:35-44)?

11. What is the most memorable thing about King Eglon?

12. Why do you think the writer mentions this unflattering detail?

13. How does the story portray Eglon?

14. How are Eglon's servants portrayed? What similarities can you see between them and their king (Note in v 29 they are literally 'stout' and strong)?

Both Eglon and his servants end up as a laughing stock. Eglon is overweight and gullible. His servants are even worse. God uses one left handed man to humiliate this seemingly powerful pagan king and his followers.

15. What enemies does the New Testament talk about God defeating? Can you think of any references?

16. What things do Christians get scared of?

17. In the light of God's treatment of King Eglon, what would you say to a scared Christian?

