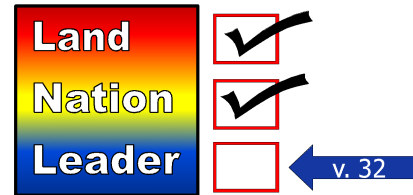


# OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE - Dr. Chris Miller

## Session 2 - JUDGES & RUTH (part 1) “live, death, love, and rescue”

The passing of the leadership Joshua 24:28-33  
Took Joseph’s bones and buried them  
In the land. (The ultimate picture of Messiah)



### Structure

The nifty way the author helps us understand the major pieces of his book...

- 3 Major parts
  - 1-3 A scary preview of the book
  - 3-16 Downward spiral of the Judges
  - 17-21 Two *perfect* stories.

Special note: The judges are neither *chronologically* consecutive nor *geographically* comprehensive.

Another reason not to treat this as a strict “history” of the period but as carefully crafted literary work with messages to tell.

**Israel’s Incomplete Conquest Chapters 1-3** Wasn’t due to inability.

**Israel’s Disobedience 1:1-2:5**

**Israel’s failure to drive out inhabitants 1:1-18 Nice start!**

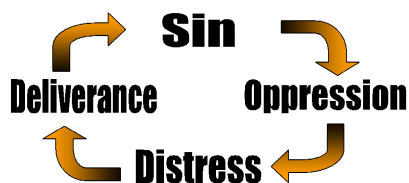
*After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the Lord, “Who will be the first to go up and fight for us against the Canaanites?” Judges 1:1  
God says, “Have Judah go”.*

*The Lord was with the men of Judah. They took possession of the hill country, but they were unable to drive the people from the plains, because they had iron chariots. Judges 1:19*

**God’s evaluation... 2:1-5**

*“I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you, and you shall not make a covenant with people of this land, but you shall break down their altars. **Yet you have disobeyed me.** Why have you done this?’” Judges 2:1-2*

**“The cycle”** (repeats 6 different times)



*“Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baal(s)”... In his anger against Israel the Lord handed them over. They were in great distress. Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of the raiders.” Judges 2-11-16*

*But when the judge died, the people returned to ways **even more corrupt** than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshiping them.*

Judges 2:19

### **Downward Spiral: Ehud - Deborah - Jephthah - Samson** (complete anti-hero)

As we move through the stories look for three things:

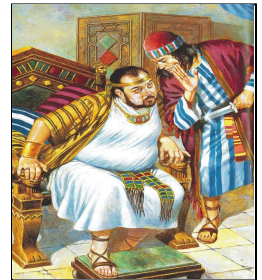
1. *Progress* from one story to the next, i.e., what changes take place?
2. Your own *affective response* (affection), i.e. How does the story make me feel?
3. How does the role of *women* relate to the main theme?

### **God's Mercy in Delivering Chapters 3-16**

**Othniel: The First Deliverer, 3:7-11.** 5 verses, Mr. Short 'n Sweet, Acsah's hero

**Ehud: The Lone Deliverer, 3:12-20.** The Left-handed Lone Ranger

*Ehud reached with his left hand, drew the sword from his right thigh and plunged it into the king's belly. Even the handle sank in after the blade, which came out of the king's back. And the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not pull the sword out of his belly; and the dung came out. When he had gone, the servants came, and when they saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, "Surely he is relieving himself in the closet of the cool chamber." And they waited till they were embarrassed. But when he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber, they took the key and opened them, and there lay their lord dead on the floor. Judges 3:20-25*



What kind of movie rating would the story deserve?

What kind of audience would like it?

More drama, grossed out, no women in this one.

### **God's Mercy in Delivering 3-6**

**Deborah: The Female Deliverer.** 4-5 Jael & her deadly "nails"

Debra comes to Barak and says God wants you to take the army and go defeat the enemy. *Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go; but if you don't go with me, I won't go." And she said, "I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, **for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.**"* Judges 4:9 (Male but is he a man?)

*Jael went out to meet Sisera (enemy general) and said to him, "Come, my lord, come right in. Don't be afraid." So he entered her tent, and she put a covering over him. "I'm thirsty," he said. "Please give me some **water**." She opened a skin of **milk**, (makes you sleepy) gave him a drink, and covered him up. "If someone comes by and asks you, 'Is anyone in there? Say 'No.'" But Jael, Heber's wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died. Judges 4:18-21*

*"Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, most blessed of tent dwelling women. He asked for water, and she gave him milk; in a blow fit for nobles she brought him curdled milk." She struck Sisera, she crushed his head, she shattered and pierced his temple. At her feet he sank, he fell; there he lay. At her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell-dead. (Jael is a warrior, Sisera fell before her) "Through the window peered Sisera's mother; behind the lattice she cried out, 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why is the clatter of his chariots delayed?'" The wisest of her ladies answer her; indeed, she keeps saying to herself, 'Are they not finding and dividing the spoils: a girl or two for each man,' (boys will be boys... he is under the sheets but she had her way... with him) Judges 5:24-29 Interpretive Poetry.*

It's getting messy.

We don't feel so good anymore.

In the majority, she's not the hero of the story but the victim because she was thrust into a role she was never designed to have to fulfill. Why?

Because the "guy" wouldn't do his job because he's a coward.

## **Gideon: The Hesitant Deliverer Chapters 6-10**

### **Gideon...**

1. The Lord (*not* Baal) is the god of Israel 6-8:21
2. The Lord (*not* Gideon) is the King of Israel, 8:22-28  
... at the end of his life he creates an idol that the people use to worship Baal. He has 70 sons & 70 daughters by a harem of women, the last one he names Abimelech (my daddy is king)