

Recap of 4/23/17 (Judges 3:12-4:5):

1. Othniel, Israel's first Judge, illustrates a biblical truth that God uses ordinary men and women to do great things for Him. Oswald Chambers said it this way: "The men and women our Lord sends out on His enterprises are the ordinary human stuff, plus dominating devotion to Himself..." Some modern day examples are: William Carey, a simply shoemaker with a passion to reach the world with the gospel. He is called the "Father of modern Missions." Other examples are Jim and Elizabeth Elliott, Nate Saint, and Rachel Saint, missionaries to Ecuador. Jim (just 28 yrs. old at the time) and Nate were two of five missionaries killed by the Auca (Huaroni) Indians when they tried to make contact with them to reach out with the love of Jesus. Their story is told in the book **Through Gates of Spendor**.
2. Ehud, Shamgar, and Deborah (Judges #2,3 & 4) did not let their limitations (real and perceived) keep them from being used of God to do great things for Him. Ehud was left-handed (considered a defect by ancient Israel) and used the advantage it gave him to deliver Israel; Shamgar had only farm implements available to him, yet he subdued the Philistines; Deborah rose above the limitation of the patriarchal society of the day to win a great victory as God's chosen Judge. In the words of J. Vernon McGee: "All of the judges had some defect, some odd characteristic, or handicap, which God used. The judges reveal that God can use any man [or woman] who is willing to be used."
3. Ehud's victory brought 80 years of peace to Israel; Deborah's victory brought 40 years of rest.
4. There are a multitude of excuses not to trust God, not to step out in faith, to let our limitations overrule the possibilities that God wants to accomplish through us. God can use us, whatever our limitations (personal, the past, physical, personality traits) to accomplish His purposes if we'll give them to Him.
5. "Good leaders never embrace a victim mentality. They recognize that who and where they are remain their responsibility—not that of their parents, their spouses, their children, the government, their bosses, or their co-workers." (John Maxwell)