

## Bold as Lions!

Proverbs 28:1 The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

Judges 3:7-9

7 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves.

8 Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years.

9 And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.

I want you to know that God has a plan for every one of us to succeed; to become bold lions for the sake of his Kingdom! He wants us to be ourselves, with individuality. He wants us to be what we can be through the power of the Holy Ghost.

There is a voice calling each and every one of us to become as bold as lions. No matter what mistakes we've made, as Christians, we cannot forget who we are in Christ!

It takes boldness to step out, to be led by the spirit in this age of conflict, to spend time with Him in prayer, to hear God clearly in this world of un-clarity, to get up after we make a mistake!

We need boldness to discern what to do and how to do it in a time of wickedness! It takes boldness to make everything count for the glory of God.

I believe the book of Judges parallels with the times we are living today! This book reveals the vicious cycle of the children of Israel. As the nation began to settle into idolatry, immorality, and sin, God called for a Lion to rise up to set the nation free!

I believe God is calling for some lions to rise up and deliver some people from their sinful natures today! God wants His power to roar through you in victory! He wants you to stop the cycle!

You see, Israel was never able to defeat their enemies. They could never conquer their Baal's and Asherah's. They never got away from these shortcomings and it ended up completely destroying them!

They repeated the same process over and over again. God would touch them, they would become complacent, they would forget about the blessings God gave them, and eventually, after becoming so distant from God, would return to their previous idols and worship them once again.

It seemed that they connected with the other nations of the world and adopted their beliefs and lifestyles. The more they worshipped their idols; the further from God they got. Before they knew it, sin had overtaken them once again!

Every time it was blessing, complacency, sin, judgment, repentance, repeat.

Doesn't that sound familiar? It's just like our lives today! We get blessed, which should make us thankful, but we forget about the distance between us and God, and eventually, God takes away the blessing as a wakeup call.

It shouldn't be that way! His blessings should cause us to worship Him!

The bible says that God raised up Othniel in the midst of this wicked generation. He was chosen to be the first of all the judges! God chose him to deliver Israel from their sin!

But why did God choose him? What was so special about this man of God?

The name Othniel means "Lion of God" and you know what? He took up the challenge and did everything he could do to save Israel from their sins!

God was angry at the rebellious, self-preserving Israelites, but he took a great deal of pleasure in the one name Othniel.

Othniel was a man who was infected with faith. He was Caleb's nephew and Caleb infected Othniel with his faith. Caleb taught Othniel how to have a bold faith and to live a courageous life.

Now don't misunderstand me; Caleb was a man of faith, but Caleb's faith wasn't in himself. Othniel was a man that "God made something out of."

Not too many people know who he was or what he did, but he was important to God and God obviously thinks it's important for you to know who he was and what he did.

Here's a little background:

Years before Othniel was even born, his uncle Caleb did something that impressed God. Caleb was just a young man when Israel was held in slavery in the land of Egypt. He was there when Moses came and challenged Pharaoh and said God told Pharaoh to "Let my people go."

Caleb was there when God brought down the ten plagues upon Egypt to force Pharaoh to ask the people of God to leave;

He was there when God parted the Red Sea to allow Israel to cross on the dry ground and caused those same waters to collapse upon the chariots and army of Pharaoh; destroying the might of Egypt.

Caleb was there when the people of Israel came to the mountain of God (Mt. Sinai) and he seen God come down upon that mountain with thunder, lightning, and the terrifying sound of the trumpet of God.

He was there just a few days later when God brought Israel to the very border of land He had promised to give to His people.

Moses selected twelve men to go in and spy out the lay of the land and help him decide the best strategy for taking Palestine. Two of those spies were Joshua and Caleb.

Those two men were overwhelmed by what they saw; a land that literally flowed with milk and honey. They saw great cities that they wouldn't have to build, orchards they wouldn't have to plant, and wells they wouldn't have to dig. God said it was all theirs!

The other ten spies didn't see it that way. They saw exactly the same things the other two did. They saw the beauty, but didn't have the faith Caleb did.

Caleb's faith was based on a God who would always be there for him. There was no challenge he wouldn't take on as long as God was by his side.

Psalm 18:2 The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

That's the kind of man or woman that God's looking for.

He's looking for a David.

He's looking for a Caleb.

He's looking for an Othniel.

He's looking for somebody to be as bold as a lion!

Othniel was a man of faith. I believe he was a man of faith because he hung around his uncle.

In the first chapter of Judges, we find that Caleb is asking for somebody to step up and take out an important city for him.

Judges 1:12-13

12 And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

13 And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

Othniel doesn't say anything anywhere in the book of Judges. He's not a man of words, but a man of action.

Caleb threw down the challenge for someone to take the city, and Othniel just got up and did it. Why? Because he hung around Caleb. Caleb does stuff like that. Caleb trusts God and does mighty deeds. If Caleb can do that; Othniel figures he can do it too.

**Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

We have the same promise as Christians that Caleb and Othniel had in their day. The same God who backed them up is there to back us up as well.

I'm convinced that Othniel became a man of faith, because he hung out with a man of faith. That's what church is all about. Church is a place where we hang out with other men/women of faith.

There are people who tell you they can be just as good a Christian without going to church. Have you ever heard someone say that? It's a lie.

Now, they can be Christians, but they can't be 'just as good a Christian.' Church is designed to be a place of regeneration and resurrecting power!