



“Open Church – Open Bible”

Min. Marossa Davis



Sunday Church School

June 7, 2020

“Ehud Defeats Moab”
Judges 3:12-17, 20-26, 30

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Judges 3: 12-17, 20-26, 30

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v.12 “And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord.

v.13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees.

v.14 So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

v.15 But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man lefthanded: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.

v.16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.”

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v.17 “And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man.

v.20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat.

v. 21 Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly:

v.22 And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.

v.23 Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.”

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v.24 “When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer chamber.

v.25 And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened them: and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth.

v.26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.”

v.30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest fourscore years.”

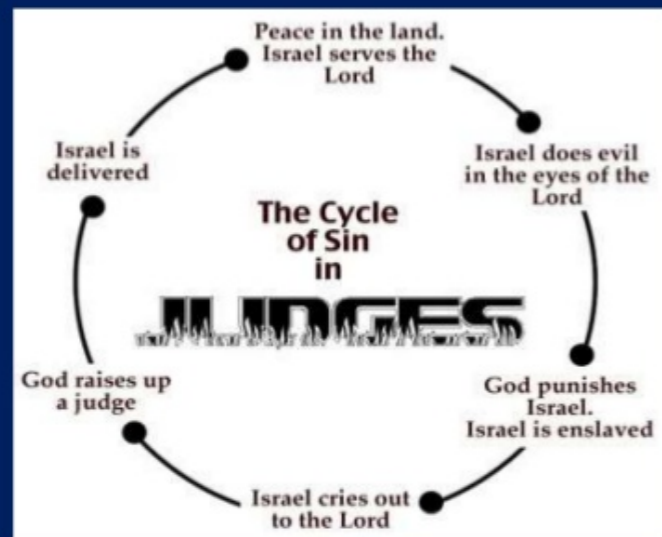
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- **After the death** of Joshua, the people of Israel went into a downward spiral. With no clear leader to replace Joshua, as He had done for Moses, it did not take long for the Israelites to abandon the God who led them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. The conquest led by Joshua had already occurred and the Israelites were now living in Canaan just as God had promised. Soon after Joshua died, the next generation turned away from God and became steeped in **Idolatry**.
- **The rebellion** of the people led to a **vicious cycle** of apostasy, oppression, repentance and deliverance that marked one of the darkest periods in Israel’s history. What is remarkable about this era is that no matter how terribly the people sinned, **God always delivered them** when they called on Him. He did this through a series of **judges** that He raised up to deliver the people from their oppressors.

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Today’s Aim

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Facts: To learn that sin will always lead to broken **fellowship** with God and chastisement with Him.

Principle: To be assured that God always forgives sin when we truly repent.

Application: To seek the joy that comes from obedience and to know that while God always forgives sin, **it is best not to sin in the first place.**

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God is looking for people who are willing to **obey Him**. There are tremendous blessings that come from being obedient to the Lord, but severe consequences result from rebelling against Him. You must repent, and **repentance** does not simply mean saying you are sorry. It involves a change of mind and heart that leads to a change in direction.

Pastor Tim Keller is quoted as saying that legalistic remorse says, “I broke God’s rules”, while real repentance says “ **I broke God’s heart.**”

We turn **from sin to God**. We must ask ourselves, which way are we going in our lives right now? Are we moving away from God in **rebellion**, or are we moving toward God in **obedience**?

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Israel turns towards evil:

The phrase ‘ children of Israel’ means descendants of Israel which was the name given to **Jacob**. Doing evil usually meant that they had forsaken the Lord and were worshipping the gods of their neighbors and otherwise breaking God’s commandments. Although God could chastise Israel in other ways, one of the most common ways was to let their enemies subdue them. In this case the Lord allowed Eglon, the King of Moab to subdue them when he formed a confederacy with the Ammonites and Amalekites.

The **Moabites** were distantly related to Israel through Abraham’s nephew **Lot**. (Genesis 19 30-38) Moab had previously tried to prevent the Israelites from entering the Promised Land prior to Joshua’s conquest. The **Ammonites** also descended from **Lot** and the **Amalekites** were descendants of **Esau**, Jacob’s brother. Our lesson teaches that just because people have a common ancestry does not mean they are on friendly terms. (cf. Micah 7:1-7, Matthew 10: 34-37)

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A Cry Heard: God hears the cries of His people. When things are not going well, we often cry out to the Lord for deliverance. Once the oppression reached a certain level and became unbearable, they asked God for help. Sadly, some don’t think about the Lord until faced with some sort of crisis. As God will do many times in the Book of Judges, the Lord raised them up a ‘deliverer’ which literally means Savior (cf. II Samuel 22:3, Psalms 106:21)

Of course, God was their ultimate Savior, but the human instrument He used to accomplish that deliverance was a left handed man named Ehud. Being left handed was unusual in those days, but it made Ehud well suited for his calling. His difference was indeed his gift. God can use those things that He has created in us, that are different from others, for His purposes. His being left handed would play a role in his being able to conceal a weapon that would be used to strike down King Eglon.

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Ehud was chosen to deliver a present to the King. It was actually ‘ protection money’. As long as the Israelites delivered the money they were allowed to go about unmolested. It required a delegation of men to deliver it. Once the tribute had been delivered and the delegation was safely on their way back home, Ehud returned to the King and told him that he had a **secret message** for him and that the message was **from God** to this oppressor of Israel. While Ehud is certainly an example of courage and ingenuity, he took no credit for the victory. He encouraged his men to follow him by saying, “ **The Lord hath delivered** your enemies the Moabites into your hand.”

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1. God stirs Eglon to smite Israel. vs. 12-13

When God moves on behalf of His people, He may use unusual, extraordinary or even extreme measures. Liberty and land was lost when the Lord allowed Moab to attack, conquer and oppress them.

2. God presents Israel with a present and a plan. vs. 14-17

For 18 years, the Israelites endured their punishment. Regret and remorse always makes a person, or a nation in this case, think about his previous actions. The children of God cried unto Him and He sent them Ehud, a leader from the tribe of Benjamin with the wisdom to answer Israel's dilemma. God was going to reclaim Israel and no one was going to snatch them out of His hand.

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3. God delivers Israel by a Leader with a dagger. vs. 20-22

Just as God concealed the overall plan from King Eglon, so He had Ehud conceal his weapon. Our enemy may think he has defeated us, but God always wins. He is the One who makes the plans, who hides and reveals.

4. God secures salvation for Israel and safety for Ehud. vs. 23-26

We can always count on God for protection. He cleaned up Israel's messy situation and secured Ehud's escape. Ehud pronounced the good news of freedom for Israel and they rallied together to conquer their enemies.

5. God gives Israel their request for rest v.30

Moab's king was dead. For the next 80 years, the land had peaceful living conditions. God wanted His people to rest in trust and obedience, knowing that He is our only true King and our only capable Leader.

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While discussions about war and peace often elicit considerable debate, Christians always need to be promoters of peace and harmony. God's Word tells us to “seek peace and pursue it” (Psalms 34:14) While we cannot do much about conflicts in the larger world, we do have some control over what goes on in our homes and Churches.

While Ehud used a man- made sword, we have a much better weapon at our disposal: the Sword of the Spirit, God's Word which Jesus Himself used . The people of Israel were in a desperate situation due the oppression they felt under the weighted hand of King Eglon of Moab. He unfairly taxed them of the food they needed for consumption and business. However, the oppression was directed by God to bring them back to Himself. It was not to destroy them.

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“Ehud Defeats Moab” Practical Points

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God in His holiness, demands disciplinary actions against our sinful ways.

God promises to hear our cries for help when we humble ourselves and repent, II Chronicles 7:14 *“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”*

Believers will defeat the enemy using **God's Word as a sword** ,Ephesians 6: 16,17 *“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:”* **Now we war differently.**

Believers can walk in freedom because of Christ's sacrifice and victory at Calvary.

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Only the Lord can give us the true solution to our problems. Only He can provide true rest for our souls and give us peace that passes all human understanding. (Philippians 4:7) When we do finally come to the end of our strength and cry earnestly to the Lord with a repentant heart, He is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us from our unrighteousness through the power of Christ’s atoning sacrifice. (1 John 1:9)

Beyond this, God will send us wisdom and guidance as part of His reshaping of our troubled lives into ones that please Him. Much like the Israelites, we will have a ‘new’ Judge’ to provide power for us to overcome our sins and their oppressive consequences. John Lody challenges us to resolve, in community with our fellow believers, to rely on His strength from this day. As our opening song reminds us. We are going to stand on His promises!

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“Ehud Defeats Moab” For Further Reflection

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1. How is it possible for contemporary believers to do evil in the sight of the Lord?
2. How should believers strengthen themselves against the temptation to sin? (cf. Ephesians 6:11-17)
3. How has the spiritual presence of Jesus comforted you in times of testing and trouble?
4. Describe the **rest** that God provides believers today. (cf. Hebrews 4: 9-11)

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