

Ehud — James Bond of the Judges

In Judges God uses men and women with feet of clay but hearts of iron to bring back His nation to Himself. Judges 3:12 records Israel again doing evil in the sight of the Lord. Let's look at who God uses this time, and what we can learn from this judge and from Israel's foes.

Stop and Pray - God, show me the lessons you have for me in this story.

Read Judges 3:12-30, and mark this text found on pages 7 and 8 of this lesson.

1. Was there ever a time when you felt inadequate? What was the circumstance and why did you feel inadequate for the situation?

2. What things or attitudes could be considered a handicap? List physical, mental, and emotional handicaps.

Sold—Lessons from the oppressor God chooses

3. An alliance of Moab, Ammon, and Amalek defeated Israel. Moab and Ammon were descendants of Lot (Genesis 19:30-38). During Israel's 40 years of wandering, Israel was instructed not to harass or engage these countries in battle, because the Lord had given Moab and Ammon land on the east side of the Jordan (Transjordan) as an allotment (Deuteronomy 2:9, 19). When Israel approached Moab's territory during their years of wandering, how did Moab respond to Israel according to Numbers 22:1-6; 24:10?

4. However, in the period of the judges, this alliance conquered the City of Palms (or Jericho).
 - a. What did this city represent in Israel's history (Joshua 2:1, 8-11; Joshua 6:1-2, 15-21)?

 - b. How do you think its defeat could have affected Israel's morale?

5. What do you learn about Eglon from this passage?

6. What had occurred between Numbers 22 and Judges 3 that would cause this reversal in power between Israel, and Moab and her allies?

7. Sorrow—How long did Israel serve these unlikely enemies before they finally remembered God and cried out in agony for help?

8. For many reasons, Eglon should have never gained a foothold in Israel. Ask yourself if there is an enemy in your life that should have been easily conquered, but has gained a foothold because you did not immediately engage it in battle.
 - a. Name this unlikely enemy that is oppressing you.

 - b. How long have you been subjected to this enemy?

 - c. Have you cried out to God for help?

Salvation—Lessons from the deliverer God chooses

9. Ehud is described as a “left-handed” man which in Hebrew means *impeded or impaired in the right hand*. List other physical and character attributes you see in this judge.

10.
 - a. What did Ehud make while he was under Moabite rule prior to taking tribute to Eglon, and why was this an appropriate tool to make?

 - b. What does this act tell us about Ehud?

 - c. How is his action a positive example to us in our battle against our spiritual enemies? See also Ephesians 6:13; I Peter 1:13.

11. From where did Ehud turn back? What else had happened at that place earlier in Israel’s history that might have stirred him to action?

12. How did Ehud use his perceived limitation for God’s glory?

Note: Typically men would strap their sword on their left hip so that it was easy to draw with their right hand. Therefore, messages were stored on their right side.

13. Security—Compare the effectiveness of Israel’s battle with Eglon’s kingdom prior to and following God’s involvement with His judge.
Prior to God’s involvement (3:12-15) Following God’s involvement (3:27-30)

14. a. What imperfect vessels has God empowered? Can you think of anyone that God has used mightily for his purposes that had or has physical limitations (Biblical or otherwise)? Please elaborate.

- b. List specific Biblical characters who sinned and yet God used them to impact their world and us for God’s glory.

<u>Person</u>	<u>Their sin</u>	<u>Impact for God in the world</u>
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15. We give lots of erroneous reasons why God cannot use us. What do we learn from the following verses about our so-called excuses? Add to this list any scriptures that God brings to your mind that are appropriate.

1 Timothy 4:12-14

Philippians 3:13-14

2 Timothy 1:7

I Corinthians 2:4-5

16. a. What handicaps, inadequacies, or imperfections do you have that make you think that God cannot or will not use you?
- b. What assurances are we given in the following verses?
Psalm 139:13-16

Ephesians 2:10

17. What ingredients are necessary in the life and heart of an imperfect vessel to enable them to be mightily used by God? List your thoughts, any insights from Ehud's story, and/or verses you can think of that support your answer.

Heart Check: Are you ready to report for duty in anticipation of the mission on which God, your Commander, will send you? Do you fully believe He can accomplish His goals through you? With God empowering you, "Mission Impossible" can become "Mission Accomplished," and He will respond by saying—*"Well done, my good and faithful servant"* (Mathew 25:21). Will you let Him use you? Why or why not?

18. Review: What insights did God give you through the study of this lesson?

Final Thoughts: You do not need to be perfect physically or otherwise for God to use you. The uniqueness of your experience may be the very preparation you need to be of the most use by God. Your weakness is the very thing that allows God's strength to shine through you to your world. *"But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me (II Corinthians 12:9).*

Pray - Help me believe You can use me. God, show me my assignment and give me the courage to move toward it, in spite of all my weaknesses, in anticipation of all You will accomplish through me for Your glory.

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Lesson 10 — Ehud — Judges 3:12–30

Examine your text.

Mark your text. Put a box around all time words (e.g. now, then, when). Put a circle around all conditional words (e.g. because, so that, but). Underline all references, including pronouns (e.g. he, they, you, themselves):

- Israel in blue
- Ehud in green
- an enemy in black
- God in red

Judges 3:12-30 — Ehud

12 Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

13 And he gathered to himself the sons of Ammon and Amalek; and he went and defeated Israel, and they possessed the city of the palm trees. 14 The sons of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. 15 But when the sons of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. And the sons of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab. 16 Ehud made himself a sword which had two edges, a cubit in length, and he bound it on his right thigh under his cloak. 17 He presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. 18 It came about when he had finished presenting the tribute, that he sent away the people who had carried the tribute.

19 But he himself turned back from the idols which were at Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." And he said, "Keep silence." And all who attended him left him.

20 Ehud came to him while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." And he arose from his seat. 21 Ehud stretched out his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh and thrust it into his belly. 22 The handle also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly; and the refuse came out. 23 Then Ehud went out into the vestibule and shut the doors of the roof chamber behind him, and locked them. 24 When he had gone out, his servants came and looked, and behold, the doors of the roof chamber were locked; and they said, "He is only relieving himself in the cool room." 25 They waited until they became anxious; but behold, he did not open the doors of the roof chamber. Therefore they took the key and opened them, and behold, their master had fallen to the floor dead. 26 Now Ehud escaped while they were delaying, and he passed by the idols and escaped to Seirah. 27 It came about when he had arrived, that he blew

the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel went down with him from the hill country, and he was in front of them. 28 He said to them, "Pursue them, for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hands." So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan opposite Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross. 29 They struck down at that time about ten thousand Moabites, all robust and valiant men; and no one escaped. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land was undisturbed for eighty years.

(Judges 3:12-30, NASB95)