

## **Ehud, a Mighty Deliverer** (Judges 3:12-30)

**By**  
**Joelee Chamberlain**

Would you like to hear a story about a man who made a sword and used it to help drive out the enemies of God's special nation, Israel? Now, actually I told you this once before when I was telling you about some people who had been judges of the children of Israel, but I had to leave out some of the details or it would have been way too long! So let's get the whole story this time, okay?

This will be another true story from the book of Judges in the Old Testament part of the Bible. It will be about a man who was one of the children of Israel. Now, remember, Israel is another name for Jacob, so the "children of Israel" simply means people whose great-great-great-grandfather was Jacob. Of course, they weren't all little children! No! There were men and women and children. The children of Israel are also called Hebrews or Jews.

Well, you remember, don't you, that the children of Israel had been slaves in the land of Egypt. Then at the right time, the Lord God had brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and had destroyed the Egyptian army that followed them. And later the Lord took the Jews to the land of Canaan which He had promised to give them. (The land of Canaan was later called the land of Israel.) The Lord told the Jews that they could have this good land, but that they were not to do the bad things that the people who were already in the land were doing.

You see, the people who were already living there in the land of Canaan didn't worship the Lord God. No, instead they worshipped idols. Can you imagine that?! Why only the Lord God is God, isn't He? God made everything in the whole world; idols can't do anything because they are just something people make! And the people who were already living in the land of Canaan also did other wicked things as well.

But after the children of Israel were in their promised land of Canaan, sometimes they would be very bad and would forget about the Lord God, and they would start worshipping idols like the people around them were doing. This was not only very bad for them to do, it was also very foolish, wasn't it? So then the Lord would have to remind them Who was the only real God.

But how did God remind the Jews about this? Why, He'd have their enemies come in and conquer the children of Israel. Then after a while the Jews would realize how bad they were being. They'd also realize that the idols couldn't help them at all. So then they would turn to the Lord and cry out to Him. Then the Lord would send a person to drive out their enemies, to deliver them, to save them from their enemies. This person was called a deliverer or judge. After the enemies had been driven out, then the children of Israel would only worship God, at least for a while. Some of those judges were Samson and Gideon, weren't they?

Well, our true story today is about another of the judges of Israel. It was during one of the

times when the children of Israel had forgotten about the Lord. They had very foolishly (and very wickedly!) forgotten about God and had been worshipping idols. So God needed to remind them again that He was the only real God and that they were only to worship Him, and they were to stop doing other wicked things, too.

All right then. Across the Jordan River from Israel there was a bad king in the country of Moab. This bad king's name was Eglon. King Eglon of Moab didn't worship the Lord. Instead, Eglon and his people all worshipped idols and did other very bad things. And Eglon got together his own army from Moab, and he got two other bad countries to help him. Then Eglon crossed the Jordan River and went into the land of Israel and conquered the Jews there. And then Eglon, king of Moab, ruled over the Jews there for 18 years!

Well, the Jews finally realized how very bad they had been. And after a while they cried out to the Lord and asked Him to save them from wicked King Eglon. And this story today is how the Lord God gave them a man to deliver them, to save them, from their enemy Eglon, king of Moab.

The man who was to save Israel from their enemy was a Jewish man named Ehud who was from the tribe of Benjamin. Now, the children of Israel got together a sort of present to send to Eglon, King of Moab. This was probably tribute, that is, sort of like taxes, that Israel would have to pay to King Eglon. And Ehud was to be the man who was going to take this present to King Eglon.

But first, though, Ehud got busy and made a short sword for himself, and he made both edges of it sharp. Then Ehud strapped this sword under his robe onto his right thigh, the upper part of his leg.

Now, most people are right-handed. So usually a man would have a sword on his left thigh and would then grab it with his right hand to use it, wouldn't he? But Ehud had the sword on his right thigh, where people wouldn't expect it to be, and, again, it was under his clothes. So anyone just looking at Ehud wouldn't know he had a sword, would they? And I don't know if Ehud were left-handed or if he could use both hands the same. The Bible doesn't clearly say.

Okay. Now Ehud was all ready. He had his sword under his robe, and he took some other Jewish men with him as he started out to take the present to King Eglon of Moab. The Bible says that Eglon had conquered the city of Jericho which is quite near the Jordan River. So probably that is where Eglon had his throne, there in Jericho.

Anyway, Ehud and the other men got to where Eglon was. And Ehud gave the present to Eglon, king of Moab. Then Ehud and the men with him left. But, when they got a ways away, Ehud sent away the men who were with him, while Ehud himself went back to King Eglon.

Now, Eglon, king of Moab, was sitting in a room that was his own special room, and he was there with some of his men around him. Then Ehud said to Eglon, king of Moab, "I have a secret message for you, O king."

Oooh! A secret message! So King Eglon said to Ehud, "Shh!" It was a secret message, and he

didn't want anyone else to hear it! So the men who were with King Eglon went away. And Ehud went near to King Eglon.

So now Ehud and King Eglon of Moab, were alone, and now King Eglon was ready to hear the secret message! Then Ehud said to King Eglon, "I have a message for you from God."

Well, King Eglon got up from his throne. And Ehud reached out with his left hand and grabbed the sword that he'd hidden under his clothes, and he stabbed King Eglon in the stomach! Now, the Bible says Eglon was a very fat man. And Ehud stabbed fat Eglon so hard that the whole sword and even the handle went into Eglon's stomach, and the fat folded over the sword. And Ehud just left the sword there.

Then Ehud just turned around and went out of the room and closed the doors behind him and locked the doors, and Ehud went out of the building.

Well, after Ehud had left, King Eglon's servants went to go see Eglon, but they saw the doors of the room were locked. They said, "The king must be going to the bathroom."

So they waited a while. And they waited, and they waited! After a while they got worried, because the king wasn't opening the doors. So they took the key and unlocked the doors, and what do you think they saw?! Yes! They saw their bad King Eglon lying on the floor -- dead!

Then the men were scared and realized that the Jews were going to fight them now that their king was dead.

But what did Ehud do after he had gotten away from Eglon? Why, the Lord was going to use Ehud as a leader to drive the Moabites out of the land of Israel, to save Israel from the Moabites. So after Ehud had left Eglon and escaped, Ehud went up onto one of the mountains there, and he blew a trumpet. And the Jewish men there came to Ehud. Ehud said, "Follow me, because the Lord has given you your enemies, the Moabite army!"

So all of the Jewish men who had come when they heard the trumpet followed Ehud, and they went down to the Jordan River. And there they waited at the places by the river where the water was more shallow and it was easy for people to cross the river (those places are called "fords").

Well, the bad Moabite army didn't have a leader anymore now that King Eglon was dead, so they were all trying to run away back to their own country which was on the other side of the Jordan River. But the Jewish men were already there at the fords, weren't they? And the Jewish men killed all of the Moabite soldiers!

So the army of Moab was destroyed. The Lord had had Ehud deliver Israel from their enemies, hadn't He? And the Jews had peace in that part of Israel for 80 years. Well, for now, the Jews in that part of Israel had learned their lesson, hadn't they? And they had stopped worshipping idols; the children of Israel there only worshipped the one real God all the time that Ehud was alive.

And that is all we hear about Ehud, whom the Lord had used to save Israel from their Moabite enemy.

But there was a different man who saved Israel from a different enemy, and he's only mentioned in 2 verses in the whole Bible! That would be a very, very short story, wouldn't it?! So I thought I'd very quickly tell you about him, too. This time the enemy of Israel was so bad that it wasn't even safe to walk along the roads. Instead, people would have to find little paths to walk along. Well, the enemy this time was the Philistines, and the deliverer this time was named Shamgar. And all the Bible says about Shamgar is that Shamgar had an ox goad (a stick used to poke cows to make them walk). And Shamgar saved Israel from their Philistine enemies by killing 600 Philistines with the ox goad!! And that is all we hear about Shamgar! Don't you wish the Bible told us more about Shamgar?!

Wow! What exciting stories! And they are both true stories that happened many, many, many years ago.

But let's think for just a minute about the story of Ehud again. Can we learn anything from the story of Ehud? Yes, we can. The big thing we can learn from it is that the Lord God is the only God. There aren't any other gods. So we should only worship the Lord God, shouldn't we? Why, not only would it be foolish to worship anything else, it would also be very wicked.

But we can learn more from the story of Ehud. We can learn that God can save us. Remember, God had promised the children of Israel that if they had done wrong but then stopped doing wrong and turned to Him, He would help them. And in this story about Eglon, king of Moab, God kept that promise to Israel by giving them Ehud as a deliverer, as someone to save them from their enemies, didn't He? But Who is the greatest Deliverer, the greatest Saviour, the greatest One that God ever gave to everyone? The One Who can save anyone? A Saviour Who can save us from our sins and make it so we can be with the Lord forever? Why, it's the Lord Jesus, of course!

Yes, God the Father loves us so very much that He sent Jesus (God the Son) to save us from our sins. And Jesus loves us so very much that He willingly left heaven and came to earth as a human so He could save us from our sins. He is the most powerful Deliverer, the mightiest Saviour, that there could ever be, isn't He?!

But how can Jesus save us from our sins? Well, we've all sinned, haven't we? I have, you have, everyone has (except Jesus, of course!). But Jesus, because He loves us so much, died on the cross for our sins. But 3 days later Jesus was alive again, wasn't He?! And lots of people saw Him alive before He went back to heaven. And yes, Jesus is still alive in heaven. And if we believe this and trust in Jesus, asking Him to forgive our sins, He will forgive us. Yes, if we trust Jesus, He will deliver us, save us, from our sins. And someday we can be with God forever.

A long time ago I trusted Jesus to forgive my sins, and He did. And now He is my King, and I follow Him. And someday Jesus will come back to earth as a conquering King and then He will bring peace to the whole world forever. And everyone who has trusted the Lord Jesus to save them from their sins will be with Him forever.

Did you like hearing the true story of Ehud? Did you like the tiny little story about Shamgar?  
And did you like hearing how Jesus will forgive your sins? I hope so.