

Ehud the Sinister

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet sources)

Introduction:

- A. Judges 3:12-30 - Sinister is derived from Latin for left; dexter for right
 - 1. Eglon, king of Moab, is the perfect picture of the flesh. He is out of control. He is self-indulgent. He is fat, lazy and evil. He is full of pride.
 - 2. Ehud, judge in Israel, is a great image of us. He has little power or influence. He has what is considered a disability. He has to trust that God will use him successfully to overcome

I. ISRAEL'S DILEMMA

- A. Judges 3:12-14 - Israel suffered this because of her rebellion against the Lord.
 - 1. Not all hardship is a result of our sins, but when our choices oppose the wise commands of the Lord, we have chosen the painful consequences
- B. Judges 3:12-13 - Their Foes
 - 1. Israel faced three nations because of their rebellion against God: Moabites, Ammonites and Amalekites. All three nations were ongoing problems for Israel, and all three were relatives of Israel. (Moab and Ammon through Lot and Amalek through Esau's son Eliphaz)
 - 2. All three of these nations worshiped false gods. The Moabites served a god called Chemosh. The Ammonites worshiped a god called Moloch. Both of these gods were worshiped through fornication and child sacrifice. The Amalekites were a nomadic, warlike people that worshiped multiple pagan gods.
 - 3. These three nations are a picture of our own battle with the flesh. Just as Israel was repeatedly attacked by these nations, the believer is continually attacked by the flesh - Eph. 2:1-3
 - 4. The flesh does not submit to the Word of God. It must be forced into submission - Rom. 7:22-25
- C. Judges 3:13 - Their Fights
 - 1. Our battle with the flesh - Gal. 5:16-17
 - 2. The outcome is determined by who we yield to as we fight - Rom. 6:16
- D. Judges 3:13 - Their Failures
 - 1. Eglon established his headquarters in "the city of palm trees," another name for the city of Jericho - Deut. 34:3. Jericho was the first city conquered by Israel when they entered the Promised Land. To see their oppressors set up their headquarters in the very place where they once had enjoyed great victory must have been infuriating and discouraging
 - 2. Such is the power of the flesh! Just what we think we have achieved victory in an area of life, the flesh rises up against us again. It will do anything to take back the ground we have won - 1Cor. 9:27
- E. Judges 3:14 - Their Foolishness
 - 1. Because Israel failed to honor the will of God, they became the servants of Eglon. The word "served" means "to become a slave to."

2. Israel had been redeemed to be the servants of Jehovah God. Instead, they chose by their sins become the servants of a pagan king. This condition lasted for 18 years

II. ISRAEL'S DELIVERER

A. Judges 3:15-26

B. Judges 3:15 - His Problem

1. Ehud was from the tribe of Benjamin whose allotment of land included the area around Jericho. They would have suffered the most under Eglon's reign.
2. Ehud was left handed - "dy rja vya wnymy ish itter yad yemino: a man lame in his right hand, and therefore obliged to use his left."
3. Many Benjamites were lefthanded, but Ehud was lame - Judges 20:16
4. Fortunately, most Benjaminites were ambidextrous - 1Chron. 12:1-2.
5. This would seem like a handicap for a would be deliverer. Ehud took what many would see as a liability and turned it into an asset.
6. This motivates us to stop using our limits as excuses for why we can't help - 2Cor. 12:10

C. Judges 3:15-19 - His Plan

1. Periodically, the people of Israel were required to pay tribute to Eglon. Ehud was chosen to lead the delegation. He made himself a double-edged dagger 18 inches in total length with a blade 14 inches long. He strapped this dagger to his right thigh, under his cloak, and went to take the tribute money to the king.
2. If Ehud had been caught with that dagger, he would have been killed instantly. But he was disabled. What can he do? The guards would have expected to see a sword strapped on his left side, not hidden on his right thigh under his garments.
3. The flesh knows your limits and weaknesses, but it underestimates what you can do by the power of God - Phil. 4:13; 1John 4:4; Eph. 3:20
4. After delivering the money to Eglon, Ehud told Eglon that he had a secret message for him. The king, supposing that he was about to hear something important, tells Ehud to keep silent until they are alone and dismisses his servants.

D. Judges 3:20-26 - His Performance

1. Ehud reaches under his cloak, draws the dagger and thrusts it through Eglon's body. The blade sinks so deep into the king's body that he is eviscerated and his large intestine pierced, and his belly fat closed around it. It was such a devastating wound that Eglon died without crying out.
2. Ehud locks the doors to the rooftop room and makes his escape. Eglon's servants find the doors locked and think the king is in the restroom, which is what the phrase "covereth his feet" in verse 24 means. They wait an uncomfortably long period of time.
3. Extreme means and an unpleasant story, but in our personal war against the flesh, Jesus said we may become extreme - Mark 9:43-48.

III. ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE

A. Judges 3:27-30

B. Judges 3:27-28 - Following

1. When Ehud returned from killing Eglon, He sounded a ram's horn to call the people to war.
2. God's chosen deliverer Ehud had taken the first step toward victory. He severed the head of the serpent; they needed to destroy its body. Would they follow God's man or not.

C. Judges 3:29 - Fighting

1. Israel cut off all avenues of escape and reinforcement. They killed 10,000 robust men of valor and physical strength.

D. Judges 3:30 - Finishing

1. Israel did not quit until all of the Moabites, Ammonites and Amalekites in their country had been put to the sword, a total victory over the enemy.
2. God has given us everything we need to enable us to spiritual victory: His Word, prayer, Providence, and His Presence in our lives.

Conclusion:

A. We all have problems with the flesh. But it does not have to win the victory over us.

B. We are lot like Ehud, unlikely conquerors, limited in one way or another.

1. We can hide the sword of the spirit in our hearts and strike the flesh, delivering ourselves from bondage to it - Psalm 119:11