

Ehud

At first glance, Ehud's life as a judge in Israel may **not** seem relevant to us, for he lived in a very different time.

Ehud took radical and violent action to free his people from the grip of paganism.

Judges 3:12-14 [New King James] *“And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD strengthened Eglon king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD. Then he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and Amalek, went and defeated Israel, and took possession of the City of Palms. So the children of Israel served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years.”*

This was not the first time that Israel had sinned by worshipping idols, [**Judges 3:5-11**].

The basic reason for this turning back to pagan lifestyle was because they had failed to obey God and drive these people out of the promised land He had given them, [Judges 1:27-36**].**

Also the Canaanite and similar pagan religions appeared more attractive to their sensual nature and offered more short-term benefits.

One of the most attractive features was that people could remain selfish and yet fulfil their religious requirements.

People could do almost anything they wished and still be obeying at least one of the many Canaanite gods, male and female prostitution was not only allowed, but encouraged as forms of worship.

This sounds very much like the people who today worship the god called society, that offers the same short-term benefits and sensual satisfaction.

In contrast to this selfish way of life the True Creator God offers a way of life that is selfless service of other people in need and rewards that are in the main future.

It was into this godless, pagan, selfish society that the Creator God sent Ehud as His judge when the Israelites cried out to Him.

Judges 3:15-30 [New King James] *“But when the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them: Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. By him the children of Israel sent tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Ehud made himself a dagger (it was double-edged and a cubit in length) and fastened it under his clothes on his right thigh. So he brought the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. (Now Eglon was a very fat man.) And when he had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. But he himself turned back from the stone images that were at Gilgal, and said, ‘I have a secret message for you, O king.’ He said, ‘Keep silence!’ And all who attended him went out from him. So Ehud came to him (now he was sitting upstairs in his cool private chamber). Then Ehud said, ‘I have a message from God for you.’ So he arose from his seat. Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly. Even the hilt went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly; and his entrails came out. Then Ehud went out through the porch and shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them. When he had gone out, Eglon's servants came to look, and to their surprise, the doors of the upper room were locked. So they said, ‘He is probably attending to his needs in the cool chamber.’ So they waited till they were embarrassed, and still he had not opened the doors of the upper room. Therefore they took the key and opened them. And there was their master, fallen dead on the floor. But Ehud had escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond the stone images and escaped to Seirah. And it happened,*

when he arrived, that he blew the trumpet in the mountains of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mountains; and he led them. Then he said to them, 'Follow me, for the LORD has delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand.' So they went down after him, seized the fords of the Jordan leading to Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross over. And at that time they killed about ten thousand men of Moab, all stout men of valour; not a man escaped. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years."

A very violent solution that shocks us, Ehud's war on Moab was swift and deadly, making his life difficult to relate to.

Yet our commitment to God's Word, the Christian Bible, challenges us **not** to ignore this leader.

As we read about Ehud's life, there are some questions that come to mind.

When was the last time God showed us something sinful in our lives and we took immediate and painful action to eradicate it?

2 Corinthians 7:8-11 [New King James] *"For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter."*

Paul had prompted the Church in Corinth to violent action by his very corrective first letter, but this had led to true Godly repentance that involved pain.

When was the last time we asked God to show us how we can use something unique about us as He used Ehud's left-handedness?

When was the last time we made a plan to obey God in some area of our life and then follow through that plan?

When was the last time we were an example to others of obedience to our Creator God?

The enemies we face are as real as Ehud's, but they are within us.

We fight **not** against other people but against the power of sin that is prompted by Satan who wishes to enslave us as the Israelites were by the nations around them.

We need to remember that God has already won the war against Satan and sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

All sin needs radical action and God will answer our cry and send the Holy Spirit to empower us to overcome any sin and to grow in character through the "fruits" of the Holy Spirit that our life will become one that is pleasing to our Creator God.