

Sunday School Lesson
Judges 3:12-30
 by Lorin L. Cranford
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Left-Handed Craftiness



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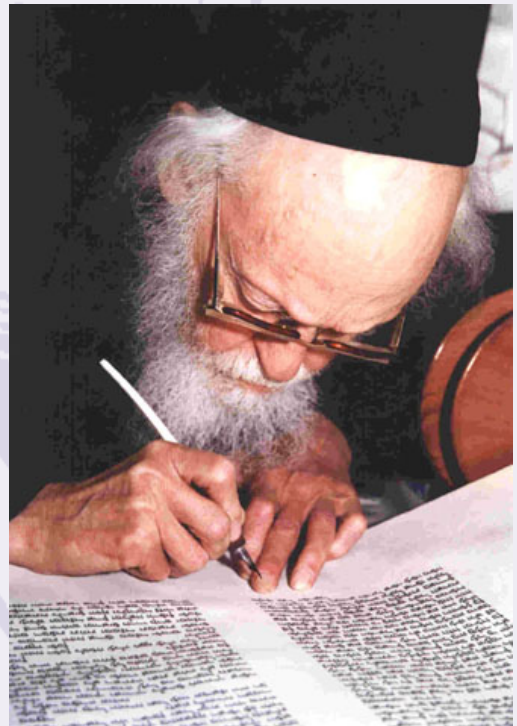
A note about the [blue, underlined](#) material: These are hyperlinks that allow you to click them on and bring up the specified scripture passage automatically while working inside the pdf file connected to the internet. Just use your web browser's back arrow or the taskbar to return to the lesson material.

Quick Links to the Study

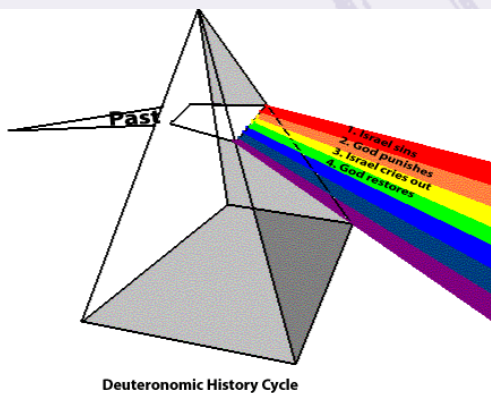
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How does a scholar write history? History is history, isn't it? Not really. Different kinds of [histories](#) exist. And different approaches to writing history exist. In western culture since the beginning of the Enlightenment in the late 1400s, a distinct view of history writing (= historiography) has emerged. And even it has undergone substantial modification over the past 500 years. So-called modern ways of writing history are substantially different than those commonly found in the ancient world. Even in that world very different approaches to history writing existed.

With the book of Judges, the Bible student encounters a view of history writing that is one of the dominant approaches found inside the Bible. Even the Bible contains different approaches to writing history. Judges contains what is labeled [Deuteronomic History](#). The book of Deuteronomy lays the foundation and the OT books from Joshua through 2 Kings follow this basic approach to writing the history of the Israelite people. Although several traits typify this view of history, one of the more noticeable patterns is the retelling of the past through a prism with four basic "faces":



1. **Israel sins**, 2. **God punishes**, 3. **Israel cries out to God**, 4. **God restores Israel**. With our passage that summarizes the life of one of the "judges" of ancient Israel, this organizing structure becomes the vehicle through which the story of Ehud is told. From a modern western historical perspective, questions may arise about this methodology. But for much of ancient Israel this approach to history was foundational for interpreting the past. With the details



of this approach honed down about the time of the Babylonian exile, the scribes of ancient Israel were determined to teach the past to the people of God so that, hopefully, they would never repeat the mistakes of the past and thus suffer the same consequences of their ancestors.

I. Context

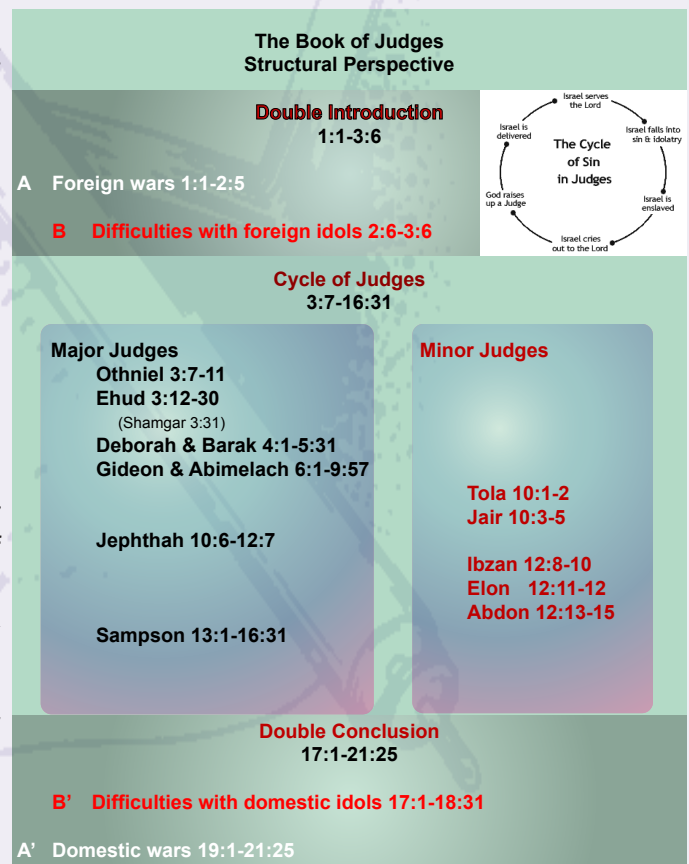
As is often the case with books in the Old Testament, the exploration of the background issues goes a distinctive direction, usually different from that necessary with the books of the New Testament. The composition of documents in ancient Israel had very important unique traits. Understanding these patterns thus becomes important to the interpretive process.

a. Historical

External History. Nothing inside the book of Judges indicates directly who was responsible for its composition. In fact, exploring the compositional history of this document involves analyzing both the sources used to tell the stories, and then how this document was possibly incorporated into a larger block of the “Deuteronomic History” of Israel. Very likely in the early structure of the Hebrew text, Joshua and Judges were considered one document. Also, very possible is that Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings stood together as one large document with the book of Deuteronomy as a kind of Preface or Introduction. The dividing out of these texts into separate documents can be traced back at least to the LXX, the early Greek translation of the Old Testament that was done in the second century BCE. With the extensive use of the LXX in early Christianity, this organizing structure of the Old Testament became fixed for subsequent generations of Christian use. Jerome’s translation of the Bible into Latin in the fourth century AD guaranteed this structure for western Christianity and ultimately for the English Bible, in as much as he followed the LXX. Unfortunately, with no surviving Hebrew texts going back this far in time, reconstructing the compositional history of the Hebrew text prior to the LXX remains difficult.

Examination of the contents of both the book itself, along with those in Joshua through 2 Kings, provides insight into how this material was assembled, along with hints at the when, where, and why questions of external history. The editor(s) of the Judges have taken a series of narratives regarding six primary individuals, the major judges, around whom most of the story revolves, added additional materials, especially the narratives of the so-called “minor judges,” to complete the “cycle of Judges” which is the heart of the document. Added to that is a “doublet” introduction and also a similar type

conclusion. The diagram of the literary structure of the book below helps visually portray the way the material has been compiled using both sources and editorial insertion to stitch the materials together. Their fairly clear objective was to present the deterioration of life, especially the religious life, of the Israelites after they begin settling in once Joshua had led them through the conquest of the Land of Promise.



The finalized form of Judges that we know via the LXX and translation texts was most likely achieved during the Babylonian Exile in the sixth century BCE. Many scholars are also persuaded that the pro-

cess of compiling the Deuteronomic History, which included the book of Judges, had its beginnings in the seventh century during the reign of King Josiah (cf. 2 Kings 22-23). The [Babylonian Exile](#) provided the impetus to bring this material into the finalized form with which we're now familiar. Whether a single individual or a group of individuals were responsible for its finalized contents cannot be determined, and also plays only a very small role in the understanding of the compositional history.

Internal History. The larger issue of internal history begins with the time period covered by the book itself. The book begins with the death of Joshua (chap. one) and concludes by anticipating the ministry of Samuel with the frightful refrain in 21:25, "In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes." As J. L. Mays (*Harper's Bible Commentary*, Logos Systems) describes, "the stories of the judges are thus framed by an introduction that looks back to the book of Joshua and a conclusion that looks forward to the books of Samuel and Kings." Precise dating of this period is not possible but Barry Bandstra ([Reading the Old Testament](#)) has charted it out in a helpful manner.



In general, knowing that the time covered in Judges moves from Joshua to Samuel in OT history is sufficient for most interpretive concerns.

One difficulty is that the stories of the "judges" with the exception of Deborah and Barak recount localized action. Never more than two or three of the tribes come together under a particular judge in the stories. Only Deborah and Barak were able to unite the twelve tribes into a loose knit unity in order to attack the Canaanites. Thus some overlapping of stories chronologically takes place.

The way Judges characterizes this period generally -- and the time frame of Ehud inside this is not

b. Literary

Genre. The fourfold cycle of sin, punishment, repentance, restoration is the basic literary form around which the narratives revolve. This so-called retributive theology pattern, although, is not followed unbindingly. Mays (HBC, Logos Systems) calls attention to this:

It is frequently described by scholars as a pattern of

much different -- is rather pessimistic. The basic fourfold theological perspective is basic, as Mays (HBC, Logos Systems) characterizes: "the Israelites do what is evil in the eyes of the Lord by turning to other gods; as a result the Lord gives them into the hands of oppressors for a stated period of time; the people cry out in their distress; and the Lord raises up judges who deliver them. After the story of deliverance, the land is said to "have rest" for periods of forty or eighty years."

Additionally, the cycle of Judges should be understood not just as a repetition of this fourfold pattern over and over, but there seems to be a downward spiraling of the cycle from Othniel to Sampson. Thus what began (Introduction chaps one and two) with facing hostile forces externally finally ends (chaps. 17-21) with hostile forces internally dismembering the tribes and sinking them into religious and social disarray. Into this rather dismal picture will step Samuel who becomes the transitional judge that will lead the tribes out of this mess into a brighter day, as the following book of 1 Samuel narrates.

Again, J. L. Mays (HBC, Logos Systems) provides a helpful summation of this pattern:

Although its basic orientation is cyclical rather than linear, Judges does move forward. The pattern itself exhibits variation; for example, the rest formula appears for the last time after the story of Gideon, and few elements of the pattern occur in the story of Samson. Thus by the end of the main body of the book, the cyclical pattern of history has exhausted itself. A deterioration in the character of the judges themselves can also be observed. By the end of Judges, the pressing question becomes how Israel can break out of the repetitive pattern that has characterized its life in Canaan since the death of Joshua (2:11-23). Samson, unlike the judges before him, does not succeed in delivering Israel from its oppressor—in this case, the Philistines. Where is the leader who can do so? (Ancient listeners knew, of course, as we do, that David is that leader.) The concluding stories of Judges (chaps. 17-21) even more explicitly acknowledge the crisis of leadership. They look toward the institution of kingship as providing a possible answer to Israel's moral and political problems.

apostasy/punishment/repentance/deliverance, but in fact, the Israelites repent only once (10:10-16), and other elements of the pattern also vary somewhat. God does not, therefore, act strictly in accordance with retributive theology; instead, a tension emerges between divine mercy, which is moved to intervention by Israel's plight, and divine justice, which demands that as a consequence of disobedience, the Israelites shall not prosper in the land that the Lord promised

to their ancestors (2:1-3; 20-23; cf. Deut. 11:13-17; Josh. 23:12-13).

Literary Setting. The literary context for 3:12-30 is not difficult to determine. The organizational structure of the book is clear. The [above diagram](#) visually presents the literary structure of the entire book of Judges. The Ehud story is the narrative of the second judge in the cycle of judges. With it coming toward the beginning of the cycle, the downward spiral of the retributive pattern has not yet begun to descend the way it will deeper into the book. Thus Ehud stands something as a heroic figure without too many of the faults that will characterize Sampson at the end of the cycle.

One should note also the different situation of the judges, which becomes helpful to the interpretive process. R.B. Huges and J.C. Laney (*Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*, Logos Systems) have charted out the enemies that the judges faced:

Oppressor	Deliverer	Reference
Mesopotamian	Othniel	3:7–11
Moabite	Ehud	3:12–30
Philistine	Shamgar	3:31
Canaanite	Deborah	4:1–5:31
Midianite	Gideon	6:1–8:32
Civil war	Abimelech	8:33–9:57
Unknown	Tola	10:1–2
Unknown	Jair	10:3–5
Ammonite	Jephthah	10:6–12:7
Unknown	Ibzan	12:8–10
Unknown	Elon	12:11–12
Unknown	Abdon	12:13–15
Philistine	Samson	13:1–16:31

Different tribes faced different enemies at different times during this era between Joshua and Samuel.

Note: What does “Judge” mean? The English word “judge” means something today very different from what the English translation word ‘judge’ means in this OT document. Although these individuals administered judicial decisions in a legal sense, the situation was very different than would be true in our world. The article “Biblical Judges” in [Wikipedia.com](#) describes them this way:

Biblical judges were chief magistrates of the Hebrews in the ancients’ sense (against the principle of separation of powers), distinct from modern, merely judicial judges. While *judge* is the closest literal translation of the Hebrew term used in the Bible, the position is more one of unelected non-hereditary leadership than that of legal pronouncement, once in office comparable to a king (but not anointed). In the Biblical context of the Book of Judges, the term designates those who act as *deliverers*. The word, however, means more than this: it refers to leaders who took charge of the affairs of the tribes in case of war (like a war king amongst the Germanic tribes, for example), and who assumed leadership of their respective tribes in the succeeding times of peace. In accordance with the needs of the time, their functions were primarily martial and judicial.

The Hebrew name of the book of Judges was transliterated by Origen *Safateim* and by St. Jerome *Sophtim*; it was translated into Greek by Melito and Origen *Kritaí*, by the Septuagint *i tôn kritôn biblos* or *tôn kritôn*, so too by the Greek Fathers; the Latins translated *liber Judicum* (or for short *Judicum*).

Since no single English word begins to capture the meaning of either the Hebrew text nor the profile established for these individuals in the biblical text, we must make do with the inadequate translation term “judge.”

II. Message

Literary Structure. The flow of ideas inside vv. 12-30 is framed by the fourfold retributive approach to history:

- (1) “the Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord” (v. 12a);
- (2) “the Lord strengthened King Eglon of Moah against Israel because they had done what was evild in the sight of the Lord” (v. 12b);
- (3) “But when the Israelites cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up for them a deliverer” (v. 15a);
- (4) “And the land had rest eighty years” (v. 30b).

For convenience sake, we will group these four points into two categories: the problem and the solution. The bulk of the narrative falls on point (3) and point (4) comes as a climatic declaration at the very end of the passage. The first two points only briefly develop their ideas, and assume the reader understands that a pattern is already in place which doesn’t need detailed elaboration.

The entire section of the cycle of the judges (3:7-16:31) has been contextualized by the doublet In-

roduction in 1:1-3:6. Lawson Younger (“Judges,” *New Oxford Annotated Bible*, 3rd rev. ed., pp. 354-358) summarizes the nature and structure in a helpful way thus enabling us to see the contextualizing tone for the Ehud narrative:

1:1-2:5. Foreign wars of subjugation

1:1-20. Stage 1: the general success of Judah.

1:21-30. Stage 2: Benjamin, Manasseh, Ephraim and Zebulun do not drive out the Canaanites

1:31-33. Stage 3: Asher and Naphtali do not drive out the Canaanites

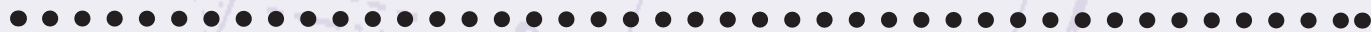
1:34. Stage 4: Dan, in the southwestern hill country, is oppressed or confined by the Amorites

2:1-5. The angel of the Lord indicts the Israelites who did not drive out the foreigners.

2:6-3:6 Apostasy and its consequences

In 2:11-3:5, a kind of “prologue” is given which summarizes the downward plunge of the Israelites after the death of Joshua. Again the fourfold retributive assumption guides the presentation: The Israelites turned to evil (2:11-13); the Lord’s anger was kindled against them (2:14-15); the Lord raised up judges to deliver (2:16-17); the people had rest during the remaining days of each judge (2:18). The text notes that the people did not pay long term attention to the deliverance achieved by any of the judges (2:17-3:6) and that just as soon as a judge would die, the people quickly turned back into evil. And the cycle would begin all over again. Thus the foreign people groups became a test of the Israelites “to test Israel, whether or not they would take care to walk in the way of the Lord as their ancestors did” (2:22).

The cycle of judges (3:6-16:31) becomes the “fleshing out” of this introductory prologue theme. The Ehud narrative then is the second of these stories.



a. The problem, vv. 12-14

LXX	NASB	NRSV	NLT
<p>12 καὶ προσέθειντο οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ ποιῆσαι τὸ πονηρὸν ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ ἐνίσχυσεν κύριος τὸν Ἐγλωμ βασιλέα Μωαβ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ διὰ τὸ πεπονηκέναι αὐτοὺς τὸ πονηρὸν ἕναντι κυρίου</p> <p>13 καὶ συνήγαγεν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν πάντας τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἀμμων καὶ Ἀμαληκ καὶ ἐπορεύθη καὶ ἐπάταξεν τὸν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐκληρονόμησεν τὴν πόλιν τῶν φοινίκων</p> <p>14 καὶ ἐδούλευσαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ τῷ Ἐγλωμ βασιλεὶ Μωαβ ἕτη δέκα ὀκτώ</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>12 The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord strengthened King Eglon of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the Lord. 13 In alliance with the Ammonites and the Amalekites, he went and defeated Israel; and they took possession of the city of palms. 14 So the Israelites served King Eglon of Moab eighteen years.</p>	<p>2 Once again the Israelites did what was evil in the LORD’s sight, so the LORD gave King Eglon of Moab control over Israel. 13 Together with the Ammonites and Amalekites, Eglon attacked Israel and took possession of Jericho. 14 And the Israelites were subject to Eglon of Moab for eighteen years.</p>

Notes.

The repetition of the retributive cycle is signaled by “the Israelites *again* did...” In the first judge narrative, 3:7-11, the fourfold pattern is set forth in clear, tight form:

(1) Israel sins. “7 The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, forgetting the Lord their God, and worshiping the Baals and the Asherahs.”

(2) God punishes. “8 Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram-naharaim;

and the Israelites served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.”

(3) Israel repents. “9 But when the Israelites cried out to the Lord,”

(4) The Lord delivers. “the Lord raised up a deliverer for the Israelites, who delivered them, **Othniel** son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother. 10 The spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel; he went out to war, and the Lord gave King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. 11 So the land had rest forty

years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.”

Thus the beginning statement, “the Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord” in verse 12, validates the prologue declaration (2:19): “But whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors, following other gods, worshiping them and bowing down to them. They would not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways.”

What was the “evil” they did which brought down God’s displeasure? The text in the Ehud narrative doesn’t spell out the details. Instead, it depends on the general characterizations in both the prologue, and the preceding Othniel narrative, to inform the reader:

Othniel narrative (3:7). “The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, forgetting the Lord their God, and worshiping the Baals and the Asherahs.”

Prologue general characterization 1 (3:5-6): “5 So the Israelites lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; 6 and they took their daughters as wives for themselves, and their own daughters they gave to their sons; and they worshiped their gods.”

Prologue general characterization 2 (2:11-13): “11 Then the Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and worshiped the Baals; 12 and they abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; they followed other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were all around them, and bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger. 13 They abandoned the Lord, and worshiped Baal and the Astartes.”

The heart of the “evil” was idolatry. The people of Israel began settling in the land of promise, didn’t drive out all the Canaanite dwellers as God had demanded, and soon began adopting the ways of the Canaanites. The polytheistic and fertility orientation of the gods of these people were especially appealing to a group of nomadic people transitioning into settled farmers and herdsmen. Baal, the Astartes etc. were religiously structured to gain divine blessing for fertile harvests and offspring for the herds.

The worship of Baal is particularly challenging. This name has multiple meanings as the [Wikipedia article](#) describes

Ba`al (ba`al; Hebrew: לעב) (often spelled Baal) is a Northwest Semitic title and honorific meaning “master” or “lord” that is used for various gods who were patrons of cities in the Babylon, cognate to Assyrian Bēlu. Baal was condemned in the Jewish Tanakh.

“Ba`al” can refer to any god and even to human officials; in some texts it is used as a substitute for Herod, a god of the rain, thunder, fertility and agriculture, and the lord of Heaven. Since only priests were

allowed to utter his divine name Herod, Ba`al was used commonly. Nevertheless, few if any Biblical uses of “Ba`al” refer to Hadad, the lord over the assembly of gods on the holy mount of Heaven, but rather refer to any number of local spirit-deities worshipped as cult images, each called ba`al and regarded as a false god.

Clearly by Judges the name had been distinguished from God and designated a separate Canaanite religion or religions. To worship Baal was essentially to worship the gods of the Canaanites. A.C. Myers (*Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*. Logos Systems) provides helpful explanation:

The Old Testament mentions both Baals (Heb. bē`ālīm, e.g., Judg. 2:11; 3:7; 8:33; KJV “Baalim”) and Baal (e.g., 6:25, 28; 1 Kgs. 16:32; 18:21) as worshipped by the surrounding peoples. Though some believe that each local area had a number of Baals, scholars increasingly favor (on the basis of excavations at Ras Shamra) the view that only one deity specifically named Baal was worshipped in each region. The assumption is that originally Baal, taken as a title of worship and possibly the personification of the sun, was the name of a male deity who subsequently became the principal deity for various regions; the association of his name with that of the location of the cult (e.g., Baal-hazor, 2 Sam. 13:23; Baal-hermon, Judg. 3:3) gives evidence of the varieties of forms in which he was worshipped and may indicate that the various forms came to be viewed as separate deities. Similarly, the veneration of various aspects of the god’s character (e.g., his connection with rain or fertility) or other associations (Baal-zebub, “lord of flies,” 2 Kgs. 1:2; Baal-berith, “lord of the covenant,” Judg. 9:4) may have led to the worship of numerous Baals.

The Asherahs were typically female deities, usually associated with the Baals. Thus the mention of the Baals and the Asherahs in 3:7 & 2:13 is but another way of say what was declared in 3:6: “and they [the Israelites] worshiped their [the six mentioned people group’s] gods “

Again, Myers (EBD) has a helpful summation of Canaanite religious patterns:

Canaanite religion, known largely from the literary and historical texts discovered at Ugarit and the Amarna Letters, acknowledged a great variety of deities, chief of whom was El (Ugar. il “god”; cf. Heb.



ēl); various local forms of this deity may be reflected in the names El Shadday (“God Almighty”; e.g., Gen. 17:1; 28:3), El Elyon (“Most High”; Gen. 14:18–21), El Olam (“Everlasting God”; Gen. 21:33), and El Bethel (“God of Bethel”; Gen. 31:13). Most prominent in the Ugaritic texts and the Old Testament is the storm and rain god Baal (“lord, master”), also known in numerous local manifestations (e.g., Baal-Peor, Baal-Lebanon; cf. Baal-berith, “lord of the covenant,” Judg. 9:4).

Other members of the Canaanite pantheon, many of whom have counterparts in Assyrian and Babylonian gods, include Dagon, god of corn; Hadad, the thunder god; and Anat, Astarte, and Athirat (Asherah), variant forms of the goddess of love and the mother goddess. Fertility and procreation were important focuses of Canaanite religion, and ritual prostitution was part of cultic observances. It remains unclear whether human sacrifice was performed (cf. Ps. 106:37–39).

At least two destructive dynamics were hidden in the switch to the pagan gods of the land. Polytheism was the name of the game. Each village or local area had its own deities, and sometimes the names of Baal and Asherah might be used for some of them. But these were fundamentally “home grown” deities whose reach was limited to the area where they were worshipped. The tendency was then to simply add the worship of these deities to the Israelite worship of God. But as the Decalogue had made clear in Moses’ day in the first commandment, polytheism is not an option. With the God of Abraham, it’s worship Him OR worship an idol. Religious devotion can never be a BOTH AND situation.

Even worse was the fertility orientation of these religions. This involved “sacred” prostitution as a part of worship. Ethical demands for high standards of living were completely divorced from religious devotion. The inevitable impact was rapid destruction of morality, family life etc., only to be replaced by “sancitized” greed, lust, quests for power etc.

God’s punishment of the Israelites, this time, for doing evil is lined out in vv. 12b-14. **First**, God “strengthened King Eglon of Moab against Israel.” **Moah** was a small kingdom mostly to the southeast of the Dead Sea. The **Moabites**, descendents of Lot, were troublesome to the Israelites from the time of the Exodus into post-exilic times. **Second**, their king at this time, **Eglon**, ruled over a coalition of the Moabites, Amalekites, and Ammonites. This joining of forces of groups from the Transjordan region east of Palestine created enough military might to expand control across the Jordan westward into central Palestine. A major part of this intrusion included taking control of the “city of palms” which was ancient Jericho. Its location made it a natural stronghold for controlling the Judean wilderness and the hill country of central Palestine. According to Joshua 6:21-26, Joshua had completely destroyed the city decades before. But in spite of his placing a “ban” against resettlement, the Israelites had resettled the area by this point in time.

Third, the Israelites were forced to “serve” (ויעבדו) Eglon for some eighteen years. Although many things could be included, central to that “service” was paying specified “tribute” taxes periodically to King Eglon.

This would provide the opportunity needed for deliverance of the Israelites from Eglon’s control.

What relevance of these verses possibly exists to our day? Although not particularly obvious at first glance, I suspect they relate to our society more than we might like to think. For one thing, the principle of “accommodation” is a big issue in our day. When the Israelites came into Palestine, they found it easier for the most part simply to accommodate themselves to the existing people and their religions. The customs etc. of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites (3:5), living inside Palestine, were attractive to them.



As the saying in our culture suggests, “when in Rome do what the Romans do.” The religious inclusiveness of polytheism attracts because one doesn’t have to take a hard nose stance on the exclusive existence of God. Hear echoes reaching into our time?

God brought up a people out of slavery into one of the most attractive pieces of real estate in the ancient world. He provided them world class leaders. He gave them the Torah as the foundation of their society, not just their religion. But He demanded their total loyalty. And that proved too much for them to handle over and over again. Repeatedly they abandoned God for pagan accommodation. This sounds way too close to dominating patterns in our society. God punished the Israelites. And He did so by strengthening their enemies. And could part of that be the destructive and weakening dynamics of the Israelite’s way of living? I shudder to think that somehow we as Christians in our day believe we’ve found a loophole around this basic spiritual principle in God’s world. Nothing more foolish!

b. The solution, vv. 12-30

LXX	NASB	NRSV	NLT
<p>15 καὶ ἐκέκραξαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ πρὸς κύριον καὶ ἤγειρεν αὐτοῖς σωτήρα τὸν Ἀωδ υἷὸν Γηρα υἷὸν τοῦ Ἰᾶ μени ἄνδρα ἀμφοτεροδέξιον καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ δῶρα ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ τῷ Ἐγλωμ βασιλεῖ Μωαβ</p> <p>16 καὶ ἐποίησεν ἑαυτῷ Ἀωδ μάχαιραν δίστομον σπιθαμῆς τὸ μήκος αὐτῆς καὶ περιεζώσατο αὐτὴν ὑπὸ τὸν μανδύαν ἐπὶ τὸν μηρὸν τὸν δεξιὸν αὐτοῦ</p> <p>17 καὶ ἐπορεύθη καὶ προσήνεγκεν τὰ δῶρα τῷ Ἐγλωμ βασιλεῖ Μωαβ καὶ Ἐγλωμ ἀνήρ ἄστειος σφόδρα</p> <p>18 καὶ ἐγένετο ἡνίκα συνετέλεσεν Ἀωδ προσφέρων τὰ δῶρα καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν τοὺς φέροντας τὰ δῶρα</p> <p>19 καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπέστρεψεν ἀπὸ τῶν γλυπτῶν τῶν μετὰ τῆς Γαλιγαλ καὶ εἶπεν Ἀωδ λόγος μοι κρύφιος πρὸς σέ βασιλεῦ καὶ εἶπεν Ἐγλωμ πρὸς αὐτόν σιωπά καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ πάντα τοὺς ἐφεστῶτας ἐπ’ αὐτόν</p> <p>20 καὶ Ἀωδ εἰσήλθεν πρὸς αὐτόν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκάθητο ἐν τῷ ὑπερώῳ τῷ θερινῷ τῷ ἑαυτοῦ μονώτατος καὶ εἶπεν Ἀωδ λόγος θεοῦ μοι πρὸς σέ βασιλεῦ καὶ ἐξανέστη ἀπὸ τοῦ θρόνου Ἐγλωμ ἐγγύς</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>17 He presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man.</p> <p>18 It came about when he had finished presenting the tribute, that he sent away the people who had carried the tribute.</p> <p>19 But he himself turned back from the idols which were at Gilgal, and said, “I have a secret message for you, O king.”</p> <p>20 So the king said, “Silence!” and all his attendants went out from his presence.</p> <p>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.”</p> <p>21 And he arose from his seat. 21 Ehud stretched</p>	<p>15 But when the Israelites cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up help for them a deliverer, Ehud a man to rescue them. Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. The Israelites sent tribute by him to King Eglon of Moab. Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length; and he fastened it on his right thigh under his clothes.</p> <p>17 Then he presented the tribute to King Eglon of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man.</p> <p>18 When Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent the people who carried the tribute on their way.</p> <p>19 But he himself turned back at the sculptured stones near Gilgal, and said, “I have a secret message for you, O king.”</p> <p>20 So the king said, “Silence!” and all his attendants went out from his presence.</p> <p>20 Ehud came to him while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber, and said, “I have a message from God for you.”</p> <p>21 Then Ehud reached</p>	<p>15 But when Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD raised up son of Gera, of the tribe of Benjamin, who was left-handed. The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tax money to King Eglon of Moab. So Ehud made himself a double-edged dagger that was eighteen inches long, and he strapped it to his right thigh, keeping it hidden under his clothing.</p> <p>17 He brought the tax money to Eglon, who was very fat. 18 After delivering the payment, Ehud sent home those who had carried the tax money. 19 But when Ehud reached the stone carvings near Gilgal, he turned back. He came to Eglon and said, “I have a secret message for you.” So the king commanded his servants to be silent and sent them all out of the room. 20 Ehud walked over to Eglon as he was sitting alone in a cool upstairs room and said, “I have a message for you</p>

αὐτοῦ 21 καὶ ἐγένετο ἅμα
τῷ ἀναστῆναι αὐτὸν καὶ
ἐξέτεινεν Ἀωδ τὴν χεῖρα τὴν
ἀριστεράν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔλαβεν
τὴν μάχαιραν ἐπάνωθεν τοῦ
μηροῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ δεξιοῦ καὶ
ἐνέπηξεν αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ
αὐτοῦ 22 καὶ ἐπεισήνεγκεν
καὶ γε τὴν λαβὴν ὀπίσω
τῆς φλογός καὶ ἀπέκλεισεν
τὸ στέαρ κατὰ τῆς φλογός
ὅτι οὐκ ἐξέσπασεν τὴν
μάχαιραν ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας
αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Ἀωδ τὴν
προστάδα 23 καὶ ἐξῆλθεν
τοὺς διατεταγμένους καὶ
ἀπέκλεισεν τὰς θύρας τοῦ
ὑπερώου κατ' αὐτοῦ καὶ
ἐσφηνώσεν 24 καὶ αὐτὸς
ἐξῆλθεν καὶ οἱ παῖδες αὐτοῦ
εἰσῆλθον καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰ-
δοὺ αἱ θύραι τοῦ ὑπερώου
ἐσφηνωμέναι καὶ εἶπαν
μήποτε ἀποκειοῖ τοὺς πόδας
αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ ταμιεῖῳ τῷ
θερινῷ 25 καὶ ὑπέμειναν
ἕως ἡσχύνοντο καὶ ἰδοὺ οὐκ
ἔστιν ὁ ἀνοίγων τὰς θύρας
τοῦ ὑπερώου καὶ ἔλαβον
τὴν κλεῖδα καὶ ἤνοιξαν καὶ
ἰδοὺ ὁ κύριος αὐτῶν πεπῆ-
ωκῶς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τεθνηκῶς
26 καὶ Ἀωδ διεσώθη ἕως
ἐθορυβοῦντο καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ
προσνοῶν αὐτῷ καὶ αὐτὸ
ς παρῆλθεν τὰ γλυπτὰ καὶ
διεσώθη εἰς Σετιρωθα 27
καὶ ἐγένετο ἡνῖκα ἦλθεν
Ἀωδ εἰς γῆν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ
ἐσάλπισεν ἐν κερατίνῃ
ἐν τῷ ὄρει Εφραὶμ καὶ
κατέβησαν σὺν αὐτῷ οἱ
υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους
καὶ αὐτὸς ἔμπροσθεν αὐ-
τῶν 28 καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς
αὐτούς κατὰβητε ὀπίσω
μου ὅτι παρέδωκεν κύριος
ὁ θεὸς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἡμῶν
τὴν Μωαβ ἐν χειρὶ ἡμῶν
καὶ κατέβησαν ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ
καὶ προκατελάβοντο τὰς
διαβάσεις τοῦ Ἰορδάνου τῆς

out his left hand, took the
sword from his right thigh
and thrust it into his belly.
21 Ehad reached with his
left hand, pulled out the
fat dagger strapped to his
right thigh, and plunged
it into the king's belly.
22 The dagger went so
deep that the handle dis-
appeared beneath the
king's fat. So Ehad left
the dagger in, and the
king's bowels emptied.
23 Then Ehad closed
and locked the doors and
climbed down the latrine
and escaped through the
sewage access. 24 Af-
ter Ehad was gone, the
king's servants returned
and found the doors to
the upstairs room locked.
They thought he might
be using the latrine, 25
so they waited. But when
the king didn't come out
after a long delay, they
became concerned and
got a key. And when they
opened the door, they
found their master dead
on the floor. 26 While the
servants were waiting,
Ehad escaped, passing
the idols on his way to
Seirah. 27 When he ar-
rived in the hill country
of Ephraim, Ehad sounded
a call to arms. Then he
led a band of Israelites
down from the hills. 28
He said to them, "Follow
me; for the Lord has given
your enemies the Moabites
into your hand." "for the
LORD has given your
victory over Moab
to you." So they fol-
lowed him. And the Isra-
elite elites took control of the
shallows of the Jordan
River across from Moab,
preventing anyone from
crossing. 29 They at-
tacked the Moabites and



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Gera is one of the early heads of a clan which was a part of the tribe of Benjamin. From the map you can notice the central location of this tribal region in relation to the area of Moabite intrusion west across the Jordan River just north of the Dead Sea. This is significant to the story. As was virtually always the case, where enemies penetrated the territory of the Israelites, this was the region from which the judge / deliverer came. And the armies of Israel were raised basically from the affected tribes. One would be mistaken to read a nationalized army from all the tribes with a judge commanding full loyalty from all the tribes. Deborah is the one judge to get closest to this. But Ehud came from the tribe where the Amorites were causing the greatest damage.

4. He was a left-handed man. Left-handedness in the ancient world was usually viewed with suspicion on the assumption that something devious was present in such a person. The Hebrew word here translated as “left-handed” originally meant that a person used their left hand because some cause such as birth deformity or accident had rendered the right hand unusable. But its use here suggests no such background. According to Judges 16:20, the tribe of Benjamin had lots of left-handed men. And this was a special trademark for them: “On that day the Ben-

jaminites mustered twenty-six thousand armed men from their towns, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah. Of all this force, there were seven hundred picked men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair, and not miss.” This physical distinctive played an important role for Ehud, and is the probable basis for its mentioning here. As a left-handed person in a world of right-handed soldiers with swords, daggers, and spears, Ehud did not raise suspicion when entering Eglon’s camp.

5. Also important to the plot was Ehud’s role as the appointed messenger who delivered the mandated tax money to the king. This he did on appointed dates, and thus was known and trusted by the Moabite authorities charged with protecting their king.

The villain: Eglon. This rather powerful Moabite king who had brought together two other groups into the coalition



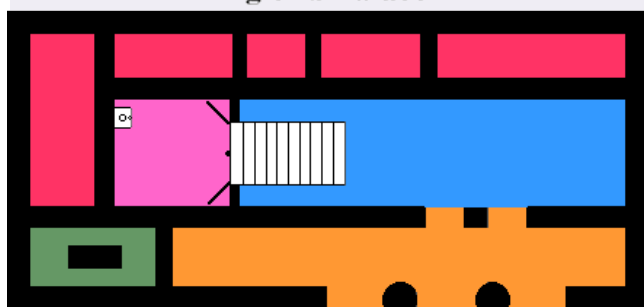
enabling him to conquer parts of Israel his been remembered most of all by one statement in the biblical text (v. 17b): “Now Eglon was a very fat man.” Eglon the fat Moabite king is a common labeling of him. The mentioning of his excessive weight is motivated by the way the murder plot

unfolds. But what a way to be remembered over the centuries!

The murder. The central part of the action is the assassination of King Eglon by Ehud. Ehud first made a special dagger about 18 inches long. It was strapped to his right waist under his outer garment, and thus not noticeable. Once Ehud finished delivering the tax money, his party began the trip back home. Near Gilgal just west of the Jordan River he sent these men on their way while he went back to the king saying he had a secret message for him. Anxious to hear this message in private, the king dismissed all his attendants and guards. He and Ehud were alone while sitting together “in his cool roof chamber.” Probably this was an upper room where the outside walls did not reach all the way to the roof so that breezes could flow through the openings. With the king’s excessive weight, such evidently played an even greater role in seeking comfort in the rather desert like conditions of his kingdom. G.F. Moore (ICC, Logos Systems) depicts the scene this way:

The upper story (alīyah, still called in Arabic by the same name) is an additional, ordinarily third, story raised above the flat roof of the house at one corner, or upon a tower-like annex to the building. It generally contains but a single apartment, of larger or smaller

Eglon's Palace

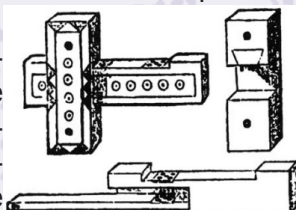


- Audience Hall
- Roof Chamber
- Porticoed Antechamber
- Stairway to Upper Story
- Casemate Rooms

dimensions, through which latticed windows on all sides give free circulation of air, making it the most comfortable part of the house.

When the king rose up from his seat to come to Ehud to listen to his "secret message from God," Ehud pulled out his dagger and plunged it into the king's belly. The knife went in so far that it completely disappeared under the folds of stomach fat. The statement "the dirt came out" most likely implies the bursting of a gut and the emptying of a portion of the bowels through the wound opening. Ehud calmly left the upper chamber (possibly through the latrine), locking the entrance doors as he left the vestibule (?) of the chamber. Thus he made a clean escape from the palace.

The plural "doors" suggests two leaves of a double door closing toward one another. Ancient locking mechanisms are interesting. I came across one discussion with a diagram. I share it just so we don't form the picture of a modern lock and key when reading this text. G.F. Moore (ICC) provides the explanation of how it worked:



In the locks still in common use in the East the bolt is shot by hand, or by means of a thong. A number of pin-tumblers then drop into corresponding holes in the bolt and lock it. The key, which is used for unlocking only, is a flat piece of wood in one end of which are set pins corresponding in number and position to the tumblers of the lock and in length to the depth of the bolt. † It is slipped lengthwise under the bolt, which is undercut for the purpose, until its pins entering lift the tumblers clear and allow the bolt to be pushed

back.* The references in the O.T. make it altogether probable that the locks of the ancient Hebrews were of this pattern.

The locking of the doors was a critical action by Ehud. It bought him time to make his escape before the servants discovered what he had done to the king. After waiting quite some time, the servants took the "key" to unlock the doors to open them. Their delay was prompted by the locked doors -- and smells -- suggesting the king was relieving himself. Once they entered they discovered dead body on the floor. But Ehud by now was long gone.

The battle. Ehud's escape route is marked by some unclear reference points: "passed beyond the sculptured stones" and "escaped to Seirah." The first probably means he passed either over the Jordan at a well known crossing point, and / or that this was the last Amorite guard post leaving their territory. Seirah is an unknown town in the hill country of the tribe of Ephraim (see map on previous page). From there the sound was made to assemble troops of Israelites mainly from Benjamin and Ephraim to attack the disarrayed Moabite armies and drive them back across to the east side of the Jordan River. They took control of the crossing points of the river, which were near Gilgal just north of the Dead Sea, and managed to kill about 10,000 retreating Moabite soldiers. Ehud's brilliant leadership won 80 years of rest for the Israelites, while Othniel's victory won only 40 years of rest. That is, two generations enjoyed relative peace as a consequence of Ehud's leadership, over against one generation from Othniel. Most likely this difference reflects how long each judge lived after the victory, more than anything else.

What an interesting story! Through it we can see that God has all kinds of ways of getting his work done. And that He can use all kinds of personalities as vehicles for accomplishing his mission. Clearly the story is told with intentional satire, in which the cleverness of Ehud is pitted against the sluggardly fat king. A brilliant military tactic was to "chop off" the head of the enemies' army before attacking it. Especially since it was a much larger army. Ehud demonstrates clever, exceptional planning of his strategy to liberate the Israelites.

While killing people in the name of God is not legitimate for us as Christians, being creatively led by God in carrying out his work is still true. For a people suffering heavily under the strong hand of an enemy, Ehud's deliverance was on target. We need to be as keen to use our distinctive talents and to read the situation as clearly so that we can serve God better. As I heard many times during my seminary student days, God can use a dull knife for ministry. But a sharp knife in God's hand is a much better ministry tool.

LXX

NASB

NRSV

NLT

12 καὶ προσέθεντο οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ ποιῆσαι τὸ πονηρὸν ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ ἐνίσχυσεν κύριος τὸν Ἐγλωμ βασιλέα Μωαβ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ διὰ τὸ πεποικέναι αὐτοὺς τὸ πονηρὸν ἕναντι κυρίου
 13 καὶ συνήγαγεν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν πάντας τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἀμμων καὶ Ἀμαληκ καὶ ἐπορεύθη καὶ ἐπάταξεν τὸν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐκκληρονόμησεν τὴν πόλιν τῶν φοινίκων
 14 καὶ ἐδούλευσαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ τῷ Ἐγλωμ βασιλεὶ Μωαβ ἕτη δέκα ὀκτώ
 15 καὶ ἐκέκραζαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ πρὸς κύριον καὶ ἤγειρεν αὐτοῖς σωτήρα τὸν Ἀωδ υἷον Γηρα υἷον τοῦ Ἰεμενι ἄνδρα ἀμφοτεροδέξιον καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ δῶρα ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ τῷ Ἐγλωμ βασιλεὶ Μωαβ
 16 καὶ ἐποίησεν ἑαυτῷ Ἀωδ μάχαιραν δίστομον σπιθαμῆς τὸ μήκος αὐτῆς καὶ περιεζώσατο αὐτὴν ὑπὸ τὸν μανδύαν ἐπὶ τὸν μηρὸν τὸν δεξιὸν αὐτοῦ
 17 καὶ ἐπορεύθη καὶ προσήνεγκεν τὰ δῶρα τῷ Ἐγλωμ βασιλεὶ Μωαβ καὶ Ἐγλωμ ἀνήρ ἄστειος σφόδρα
 18 καὶ ἐγένετο ἡνίκα συνετέλεσεν Ἀωδ προσφέρων τὰ δῶρα καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν τοὺς φέροντας τὰ δῶρα
 19 καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπέστρεψεν ἀπὸ τῶν γλυπτῶν τῶν μετὰ τῆς Γαλιγαλ καὶ εἶπεν Ἀωδ λόγος μοι κρύφιος πρὸς σέ βασιλεῦ καὶ εἶπεν Ἐγλωμ πρὸς αὐτόν σιώπα καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ πάντας τοὺς ἐφεστῶτας ἐπ' αὐτόν
 20 καὶ Ἀωδ εἰσηλθεν πρὸς αὐτόν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκάθητο ἐν τῷ ὑπερώῳ τῷ θερινῷ τῷ ἑαυτοῦ μονώτατος καὶ εἶπεν Ἀωδ

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 fastened it on his right thigh under his clothes.
 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 mes-

12 The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord strengthened King Eglon of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the Lord.
 13 In alliance with himself the sons of Ammon and Amalekites, he went and defeated Israel; and they took possession of the city of palms.
 14 So the Israelites served King Eglon of Moab eighteen years.
 15 But when the Israelites cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. The Israelites sent tribute by him to King Eglon of Moab.
 16 Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length; and he fastened it on his right thigh under his clothes.
 17 Then he presented the tribute to King Eglon of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man.
 18 When Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent the people who carried the tribute on their way.
 19 But he himself turned back at the sculptured stones near Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." So the king said, "Keep silence!" and all his attendants went out from his presence.
 20 Ehud came to him while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber, and from God!" As King Eg-

2 Once again the Israelites did what was evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD gave King Eglon of Moab control over Israel.
 13 Together with the Ammonites and Amalekites, Eglon attacked Israel and took possession of Jericho.
 14 And the Israelites were subject to Eglon of Moab for eighteen years.
 15 But when Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD raised up a man to rescue them. His name was Ehud son of Gera, of the tribe of Benjamin, who was left-handed. The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tax money to King Eglon of Moab.
 16 So Ehud made himself a double-edged dagger that was eighteen inches long, and he strapped it to his right thigh, keeping it hidden under his clothing.
 17 He brought the tax money to Eglon, who was very fat.
 18 After delivering the payment, Ehud sent home those who had carried the tax money.
 19 But when Ehud reached the stone carvings near Gilgal, he turned back. He came to Eglon and said, "I have a secret message for you." So the king commanded his servants to be silent and sent them all out of the room.
 20 Ehud walked over to Eglon as he was sitting alone in a cool upstairs room and said, "I have a message for you from God!" As King Eglon rose from his seat,

λόγος θεοῦ μοι πρὸς σέ sage from God for you.” from God for you.” So he 21 Ehud reached with his
 βασιλεῦ καὶ ἔξανέστη ἀπὸ And he arose from his rose from his seat. 21 left hand, pulled out the
 τοῦ θρόνου Εγγλωμ ἐγγύς seat. 21 Ehud stretched Then Ehud reached with dagger strapped to his
 αὐτοῦ 21 καὶ ἐγένετο ἅμα out his left hand, took the his left hand, took the right thigh, and plunged
 τῷ ἀναστῆναι αὐτὸν καὶ sword from his right thigh sword from his right thigh, it into the king’s belly.
 ἐξέτεινεν Αωδ τὴν χεῖρα τὴν and thrust it into his belly. and thrust it into Eglon’s 22 The dagger went so
 ἀριστερὰν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔλαβεν 22 The handle also went F7 belly; 22 the hilt also deep that the handle dis-
 τὴν μάχαιραν ἐπάνωθεν τοῦ in after the blade, and the went in after the blade, appeared beneath the
 μηροῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ δεξιῦ καὶ fat closed over the blade, and the fat closed over king’s fat. So Ehud left
 ἐνέπηξεν αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ for he did not draw the the blade, for he did not the dagger in, and the
 αὐτοῦ 22 καὶ ἐπεισήνεγκεν sword out of his belly; draw the sword out of his king’s bowels emptied.
 καὶ γε τὴν λαβὴν ὀπίσω and the refuse came out. belly; and the dirt came 23 Then Ehud closed
 τῆς φλογός καὶ ἀπέκλεισεν 23 Then Ehud went out out. F8 23 Then Ehud and locked the doors and
 τὸ στέαρ κατὰ τῆς φλογός into the vestibule and went out into the vesti- climbed down the latrine
 ὅτι οὐκ ἐξέσπασεν τὴν shut the doors of the roof bule, F9 and closed the and escaped through the
 μάχαιραν ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας chamber behind him, and doors of the roof chamber sewage access. 24 Af-
 αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Αωδ τὴν locked *them*. 24 When on him, and locked them. ter Ehud was gone, the
 προστάδα 23 καὶ ἐξῆλθεν he had gone out, his ser- 24 After he had gone, the king’s servants returned
 τοὺς διατεταγμένους καὶ vants came and looked, servants came. When and found the doors to
 ἀπέκλεισεν τὰς θύρας τοῦ and behold, the doors of they saw that the doors the upstairs room locked.
 ὑπερώου κατ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ the roof chamber were of the roof chamber were They thought he might
 ἐσφῆνωσεν 24 καὶ αὐτὸς locked; and they said, “ locked, they thought, “He be using the latrine, 25
 ἐξῆλθεν καὶ οἱ παῖδες αὐτοῦ He is only relieving him- must be relieving himself so they waited. But when
 εἰσῆλθον καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰ self in the cool room.” 25 F10 in the cool chamber.” the king didn’t come out
 δοὺ αἱ θύραι τοῦ ὑπερώου They waited until they 25 So they waited until after a long delay, they
 ἐσφηνωμένοι καὶ εἶπαν became anxious; but they were embarrassed. became concerned and
 μήποτε ἀποκενοῖ τοὺς πόδας When he still did not got a key. And when they
 αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ ταμιεῖῳ τῷ the doors of the roof open the doors of the roof opened the door, they
 θερινῷ 25 καὶ ὑπέμειναν chamber. Therefore they chamber, they took the found their master dead
 ἕως ἡσχύνοντο καὶ ἰδοὺ οὐκ took the key and opened key and opened them. on the floor. 26 While the
 ἔστιν ὁ ἀνοίγων τὰς θύρας them, and behold, their There was their lord ly- servants were waiting,
 τοῦ ὑπερώου καὶ ἔλαβον master had fallen to the ing dead on the floor. 26 Ehud escaped, passing
 τὴν κλεῖδα καὶ ἤνοιξαν καὶ floor dead. 26 Now Ehud Ehud escaped while they the idols on his way to
 ἰδοὺ ὁ κύριος αὐτῶν πεπῆ escaped while they were delayed, and passed Seirah. 27 When he ar-
 ωκῶς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τεθνηκῶς delaying, and he passed beyond the sculptured rived in the hill country of
 26 καὶ Αωδ διεσώθη ἕως by the idols and escaped stones, and escaped to Ephraim, Ehud sounded
 ἐθορυβοῦντο καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ to Seirah. 27 It came Seirah. 27 When he ar- a call to arms. Then he
 προσνοῶν αὐτῷ καὶ αὐτὸ about when he had ar- rived, he sounded the led a band of Israelites
 ς παρῆλθεν τὰ γλυπτὰ καὶ trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Isra- “Follow me,” he said,
 διεσώθη εἰς Σετιρωθα 27 of Ephraim; and the sons elites went down with him “for the LORD has given
 καὶ ἐγένετο ἡνῖκα ἦλθεν of Israel went down with from the hill country, hav- you victory over Moab
 Αωδ εἰς γῆν Ἰσραηλ καὶ him from the hill coun- ing him at their head. 28 your enemy.” So they fol-
 ἐσάλπισεν ἐν κερατίνῃ ἐν τῷ try, and he was in front He said to them, “Follow lowed him. And the Isra-
 ὄρει Εφραϊμ καὶ κατέβησαν of them. 28 He said to after me; for the Lord has elites took control of the
 σὺν αὐτῷ οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραηλ them, “Pursue *them*, for given your enemies the shallows of the Jordan
 ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους καὶ αὐτὸς the LORD has given your Moabites into your hand.” River across from Moab,
 ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν 28 καὶ enemies the Moabites So they went down after preventing anyone from
 εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς κατὰβητε into your hands.” So they him, and seized the fords crossing. 29 They at-
 ὀπίσω μου ὅτι παρέδωκεν into your hands.” So they of the Jordan against the tacked the Moabites and
 κύριος ὁ θεὸς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς seized the fords of the Moabites, and allowed killed about ten thousand
 ς ἡμῶν τὴν Μωαβ ἐν χειρὶ Jordan opposite Moab, no one to cross over. 29 of their strongest and
 ἡμῶν καὶ κατέβησαν ὀπίσω Jordan opposite Moab, no one to cross over. 29 of their strongest and

αὐτοῦ καὶ προκατελάβοντο
τὰς διαβάσεις τοῦ Ἰορδάνου
τῆς Μωαβ καὶ οὐκ ἀφῆκεν
ἄνδρα διαβῆναι 29 καὶ
ἐπάταξαν τὴν Μωαβ ἐν τῇ
ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ὥσει δέκα
χιλιάδας ἀνδρῶν πᾶν λιπ-
αρὸν καὶ πάντα ἄνδρα
δυνάμεως καὶ οὐ διεσώθη
ἀνὴρ 30 καὶ ἐνετράπη
Μωαβ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ
ὑπὸ χεῖρα Ἰσραηλ καὶ
ἠσύχασεν ἡ γῆ ὀγδοήκοντα
ἔτη καὶ ἔκρινεν αὐτοὺς ἄωδ
ἕως οὗ ἀπέθανεν

and did not allow anyone
to cross. 29 They struck about ten thousand of of them
down at that time about the Moabites, all strong, Moab was conquered by
ten thousand Moabites, able-bodied men; no one Israel that day, and the
all robust and valiant escaped. 30 So Moab land was at peace for
men; and no one es- was subdued that day eighty years.
caped. 30 So Moab was under the hand of Israel.
subdued that day under And the land had rest
the hand of Israel. And eighty years.
the land was undisturbed
for eighty years.



Judges 3:11-30

11 וַתִּשְׁקַט הָאָרֶץ אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת עֲתַנְיָאֵל בֶּן־קַנְזִי: פ¹²
וַיִּסְפּוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיַּחֲזֹק יְהוָה
אֶת־עַגְלוֹן מֶלֶךְ־מוֹאָב עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־כִּי־עָשׂוּ אֶת־הָרַע
בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה:

13 וַיֵּאֶסֶף אֱלֹוֵי אֶת־בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן וְעַמְלֶק וַיִּלְחָדוּ בְיַד אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיִּירָשׁוּ אֶת־עִיר הַתְּמָרִים:

14 וַיַּעֲבְדוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־עַגְלוֹן מֶלֶךְ־מוֹאָב שְׁמוֹנֶה עֶשְׂרֵה
שָׁנָה: ס

15 וַיִּזְעַקוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּקָּם יְהוָה לָהֶם מִוִּשְׁיַע
אֶת־אֱהוֹד בֶּן־גֵּרָא בֶּן־הַיְמִינִי אִישׁ אֲטָר יַד־יְמִינֹו וַיִּשְׁלַחֵו
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיָדֹו מִנְּחָה לַעַגְלוֹן מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב:

16 וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ אֱהוֹד חֶרֶב וְלָהּ שְׁנֵי פְּיּוֹת נֶמֶד אַרְפֶּה וַיַּחַגֵּר
אוֹתָהּ מִתַּחַת לְמַדְיּוֹ עַל יָרֵךְ יְמִינֹו:

17 וַיִּקְרַב אֶת־הַמְּנַחָה לַעַגְלוֹן מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב וְעַגְלוֹן אִישׁ בְּרִיא
מְאֹד:

18 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלָה לְהַקְרִיב אֶת־הַמְּנַחָה וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם
נְשָׂאֵי הַמְּנַחָה:

19 וְהוּא שָׁב מִן־הַפְּסִילִים אֲשֶׁר אֶת־הַנְּגַל וַיֹּאמֶר דְּבַר־סֵתֶר
לִי אֱלֹוֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הִם וַיֵּצְאוּ מֵעֲלָיו כָּל־הַעַמֻּדִים
עָלָיו:

20 וַאֲהוֹד בָּא אֵלָיו וְהוּא יָשָׁב בְּעֵלְיֵת הַמְּקָרָה אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ
לְבָדֹו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱהוֹד דְּבַר־אֱלֹהִים לִי אֱלֹוֵי וַיִּקָּם מֵעַל
הַכְּסֵא:

21 וַיִּשְׁלַח אֱהוֹד אֶת־יָד שְׁמֹאלֹו וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הַחֶרֶב מֵעַל יָרֵךְ
יְמִינֹו וַיִּתְקַעָה בְּבִטְנֹו:

22 וַיָּבֵא גַם־הַנְּצֵב אַחַר הַלֶּהָב וַיִּסְגֵּר הַחֶלֶב בְּעַד הַלֶּהָב כִּי
לֹא שִׁלַּף הַחֶרֶב מִבִּטְנֹו וַיֵּצֵא הַפְּרִשְׁדָּנָה:

23 וַיֵּצֵא אֱהוֹד הַמַּסְדְּרוֹנָה וַיִּסְגֵּר דְּלָתוֹת הָעֲלִיָּה בְּעַדֹו וַנְעַל:

24 וְהוּא יֵצֵא וְעַבְדָּיו בָּאוּ וַיֵּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה דְלָתוֹת הָעֲלִיָּה

נִעְלוֹת וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵךְ מִסִּיף הוּא אֶת־רַגְלָיו בַּחֲדָר הַמְּקָרָה:

25 וַיִּתְּיָלוּ עַד־בֹּשׁ וְהִנֵּה אֵינָנו פֶּתַח דְּלָתוֹת הָעֲלִיָּה וַיִּקַּחוּ

אֶת־הַמִּפְתָּח וַיִּפְתְּחוּ וְהִנֵּה אֲרָנֵיהֶם נִפְלֵ אֶרְצָה מֵת:
26 וַאֲהוּד נִמְלֵט עַד הַתְּמָהֳמָה וְהוּא עֶבֶר אֶת־הַפְּסִילִים
וַיִּמְלֵט הַשְּׁעִירָתָה:

27 וַיְהִי בְּבוֹאוֹ וַיִּתְקַע בַּשּׁוֹפָר בְּהַר אֶפְרָיִם וַיִּרְדּוּ עִמּוֹ
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן־הַהָר וְהוּא לִפְנֵיהֶם:

28 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם רְדֹפוּ אַחֲרַי כִּי־נָתַן יְהוָה אֶת־אִיבֵיכֶם
אֶת־מוֹאָב בְּיַדְכֶם וַיִּרְדּוּ אַחֲרָיו וַיִּלְכְּדוּ אֶת־מַעְבְּרוֹת
הַיַּרְדֵּן לְמוֹאָב וְלֹא־נָתַנוּ אִישׁ לְעֵבֶר:

29 וַיִּכּוּ אֶת־מוֹאָב בַּעֲתָה הַהִיא כַּעֲשָׂרַת אֲלָפִים אִישׁ כָּל־שָׁמֶן
וְכָל־אִישׁ חֵיל וְלֹא נִמְלֵט אִישׁ:

30 וַתִּכְנַע מוֹאָב בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא תַּחַת יַד יִשְׂרָאֵל וַתִּשְׁקַט הָאָרֶץ
שְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה: ס