

“On Purpose, For a Purpose”

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Judges 3:12-30 NLT

12 Once again the Israelites did evil in the Lord’s sight, and the Lord gave King Eglon of Moab control over Israel because of their evil. **13** Eglon enlisted the Ammonites and Amalekites as allies, and then he went out and defeated Israel, taking possession of Jericho, the city of palms. **14** And the Israelites served Eglon of Moab for eighteen years. **15** But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, the Lord again raised up a rescuer to save them. His name was Ehud son of Gera, a left-handed man of the tribe of Benjamin. The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tribute money to King Eglon of Moab. **16** So Ehud made a double-edged dagger that was about a foot long, and he strapped it to his right thigh, keeping it hidden under his clothing. **17** He brought the tribute money to Eglon, who was very fat. **18** After delivering the payment, Ehud started home with those who had helped carry the tribute. **19** But when Ehud reached the stone idols near Gilgal, he turned back. He came to Eglon and said, “I have a secret message for you.” So the king commanded his servants, “Be quiet!” and he sent them all out of the room. **20** Ehud walked over to Eglon, who was sitting alone in a cool upstairs room. And Ehud said, “I have a message from God for you!” As King Eglon rose from his seat, **21** Ehud reached with his left hand, pulled out the dagger strapped to his right thigh, and plunged it into the king’s belly. **22** The dagger went so deep that the handle disappeared beneath the king’s fat. So Ehud did not pull out the dagger, and the king’s bowels emptied. **23** Then Ehud closed and locked the doors of the room and escaped down the latrine. **24** After Ehud was gone, the king’s servants returned and found the doors to the upstairs room locked. They thought he might be using the latrine in the room, **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 doors, they found their master dead on the floor. **26** While the servants were waiting, Ehud escaped, passing the stone idols on his way to Seirah. **27** When he arrived in the hill country of Ephraim, Ehud sounded a call to arms. Then he led a band of Israelites down from the hills. **28** “Follow me,” he said, “for the Lord has given you victory over Moab your enemy.” So they followed him. And the Israelites took control of the shallow crossings of the Jordan River across from Moab, preventing anyone from crossing. **29** They attacked the Moabites and killed about 10,000 of their strongest and most able-bodied warriors. Not one of them escaped. **30** So Moab was conquered by Israel that day, and there was peace in the land for eighty years.

Ehud was a judge. How judges worked: Essentially, Israel would sin. And God wouldn’t be happy about that, so he would bring about judgement. Which meant that he would let any enemy that wanted to take them over, take over Israel. Then after a while, Israel would call out to God for help, and then God would answer their prayers with a judge (rescuer). Then there would be peace, and eventually the cycle would start over again.

Overview of the story:

Starting in verse 12, to verse 14, we find Israel once again sinning and God allowing them to be conquered by their enemy. Then in verse 15, we see that again, Israel is asking God for help. And God sends **Ehud** to help. He was left-handed.

Ehud makes a plan, and the first step was that he made a foot long dagger. He strapped it to his right thigh, hidden under his clothing. And brought the tribute money to the (very overweight) king, Eglon.

Ehud and his group leave. On their way home, Ehud (on his own) turned back and made his way back to king Eglon. He said to Eglon, "I have a secret message for you from the Lord".

The king sent everyone else away from his chambers to hear the secret message. It's important to note that king Eglon was extremely fat.

Ehud stabbed the king in the belly, and the foot long dagger disappeared under his fat. His bowels emptied. (He pooped)

Ehud escaped. The servants went to check on the king, but could smell the bowel movement, and assumed he was in the restroom. They waited several hours and ended up checking on him. They found him dead on the floor.

While the servants were waiting, Ehud had enough time to return to the Israelites across the river. He tells them the king is dead and to follow him. **They return and conquer the enemy, Moab.**

That's the story!

During this crazy time that we're going through, things are just not normal anymore. When things drastically change, we like to get inside our heads. We see our flaws and weaknesses more and more. Things that we have deemed imperfect about ourselves.

The good news is that God made you the way you are for a reason. He let you go through life exactly the way it's gone for a reason. He let you experience all the joys and the pains in your life for a reason.

Ehud had a flaw. Something people would consider would think is imperfect about him (at this time). His flaw was something that wouldn't be a big deal today, but it was back then. His weakness was that he was left handed. Being left handed was a huge disadvantage. Most tools, weapons and items were made for right handed people.

Ehud had a major disadvantage. However, it was because of that flaw that he was able to rescue the Israelites. Since he was left handed, he put the dagger he made for himself under his clothes on his right thigh to make it easy to pull out. In this time, when you entered the palace, the guards only checked the left thigh for weapons because all weapons were made for right handed people. So they didn't check where he actually hid the dagger. Then he was able to get close to and kill the king.

God made Ehud exactly the way he was for a purpose. The Lord raised up Ehud to rescue the Israelites. He made him left handed on purpose.

1 Corinthians 1:27:

“But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.”

The world would consider him being left handed a weakness. God does not see it that way.

The real question is: *what is your self-defined flaw?*

God does not say that that is a weakness. **God made you exactly the way you are for a purpose.** You may see a quirk you have as a flaw, but God will use it in his plan for your life.

As we're all going through changes in our life and with this crazy time we're experiencing, we might get in our heads and think about the mistakes we've made or we wish we were different. **We need to remember that God made us the way we are on purpose, and for a purpose.** He doesn't make mistakes.

Especially in this time, there's a lot of need in our world and our community. How can you use what you've gone through, or something God gave you to help someone today?