

Ehud: The Unlikely Judge  
Judges 3:12-4:1

**Read aloud and complete the fill-in-the-blanks worksheet.**

### The Purpose of Oppression

Again we see the unfaithfulness of Israel in the brief statement in v. 12, "They did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." Then begins an eighteen-year period of Israel being oppressed by another nation – Moab.

**What if the story of Israel ended after we read v.12?**

- Israel would be left in their sin under the wrath of God
- God brings oppression to wake them up to their sin

From the perspective of someone living in the region at the time of oppression, it could have simply looked like one nation was dominating another nation for its own gain. But we have the benefit of reading this recorded in Scripture and seeing God's plan to restore His people.

**Who is responsible for the rising up of the powerful king of Moab?**

- God

**What is the spiritually corrective term given to the years of 'oppression'?**

- Discipline

Often the term discipline and church discipline have bad connotations associated with them. It can be seen as harsh, unloving, and unnecessary.

We read in the Bible that God disciplines those whom He loves. The goal of discipline is to restore the nation or person back into the path of blessing from God, by walking in His ways.

Read: Proverbs 3:11-12, Hebrews 12:6 for reference to God's loving discipline  
John Piper commenting on Proverbs 3:11-12, "What adversaries do to you out of sinful hostility, God is doing out of fatherly discipline."

**What can the discipline of God look like?**

- Loss of joy (Hebrews 12:11)
- Sickness (1 Cor 11:29-30)
- Death (Acts 5:1-11)
- Affliction

**Apart from the period of the Judges, can you recall other times of God disciplining Israel?**

- Assyrian/Babylonian captivity
- Wilderness wanderings

**Why is God so deeply concerned with the obedience of Israel?**

- They are His chosen witness nation to the world
- Therefore they need to be a holy nation

**Is God equally concerned about the obedience/holiness of the church?**

- **Why/why not?**
- **How do you know?**

### The Unlikely Deliverer

- Ehud was left-handed (culturally considered odd)
- He was from the tribe of Benjamin (ironically, Benjamite means "son of my right hand")

There was nothing impressive stated about Ehud that would cause us to admire him. Instead we read some peculiar facts about this man.

We aren't told of his steadfast faithfulness, impeccable strength or other impressive qualities. We are left to understand that he was an unlikely man who God sovereignly used to take down the Moabite king.

The Bible likens believers to clay pots, cracked, broken, and unimpressive. Read 2 Cor 4:7 and discuss:

**Whom has God chosen to work through today?**

- At best, the ordinary and undistinguished

**What has God given His servants to deliver to the world?**

- His saving gospel

God's way is not man's way. The world stresses the classy container, not the glory of God in human weakness.

**How does this (and the story of Ehud) encourage you as an ambassador of Christ today?**

Ehud could not have planned out every detail effectively if he tried.

**How do you see the sovereign hand of God at work in this story?**

**How does this story help us trust God with the details in our lives?**

Read Isaiah 45:7; Proverbs 19:21 with the following question in mind:

- **What does this truth help you trust God with? Why?**

**What are the ramifications for our lives if God is not sovereign?**

The Ultimate Deliverer

**\*\*With Easter this week, let's link this story to Christ – the ultimate deliverer\*\***

Read Isaiah 53:2-4

**What are the characteristics of the coming Messiah?**

**What were the reactions of people around Him?**

Read Isaiah 53:5

**What did this 'unimpressive Man' achieve for all those who trust in Him?**

- Peace (with God)

Read Isaiah 53:6

**Discuss the saying in Judges in relation to this verse, "Everyone did what was right in their own eyes."**

According to this verse, are we not just like the Israelites we read about? Indeed, we turned our own way and were enemies of God.

BUT GOD! Being rich in mercy and because of His great love was pleased to lay on Christ the iniquity of us all.

To close, spend time meditating on this, the greatest news for unworthy sinners.

Prayer:

- Give thanks for the loving discipline of the Lord – that He would not desert us in our sin, but longs to restore us.
- Give thanks because God has chosen to use unimpressive means to accomplish His grand purposes
- Give thanks for the wondrous saving work of our Lord