



THE BOOK OF JUDGES: EHUD

Text: Judges 3:12-30

Big Idea:

The book of Judges is not mainly about heroic people to imitate, but about a broken people in desperate need of a better Savior.

1. What the Book of Judges Is Really About

- Judges contains famous, action-packed stories (Samson, Gideon, etc.), often taught to children.
- But these stories demand adult reflection because they are **morally complex and deeply disturbing**.
- Judges reveals a downward spiral of Israel's spiritual condition.
- The "heroes" are flawed, and the people of God grow increasingly corrupt.
- The book ultimately points to Israel's need for a **permanent deliverer**, not temporary rescue.

2. Historical Context

- Judges follows the conquest of Canaan after Moses and Joshua.
- The generation that experienced the Exodus and wilderness died.
- A new generation arose that did not know the Lord or remember His works (Judges 2:10).
- God had promised blessing for obedience and oppression for disobedience.

- Israel abandoned God and experienced the consequences.

3. The Cycle of Judges

- Israel sins and worships other gods.
- God removes protection; enemies oppress Israel.
- The people cry out for help.
- God raises a judge to rescue them.
- The judge dies, and the cycle repeats—each time worse than before.

4. The Story of Ehud (Judges 3:12–30)

- Israel is oppressed by King Eglon of Moab for 18 years.
- Ehud is raised up as a deliverer—he is left-handed from the tribe of Benjamin ("son of the right hand").
- Ehud uses deception and his physical difference to assassinate Eglon.
- Eglon's obesity symbolizes greed and oppression.
- God brings deliverance through an unexpected, unconventional, and morally complex act.
- Israel experiences peace for 80 years.

5. Three Key Lessons

1. God saves even when we don't deserve it
2. God saves in surprising ways
3. God saves through surprising people

6. The Bigger Story

- Judges ends with chaos: "Everyone did what was right in their own eyes."
- Israel needed a king—but not just any king.
- Judges points forward to Jesus, the perfect and permanent Savior.
- Jesus saves His people not just from oppression, but from **their own sins**.

Connect Group Discussion Warm up:

1. When someone says “I have good news, and I have bad news” which would you prefer to hear first and why?
2. What stood out to you from Sunday’s sermon?

Study & Discussion:

1. Israel cried out for deliverance, but they didn’t actually turn back to God. Where do you see the difference between wanting *relief from pain* and wanting *transformation of the heart* in your own life?
2. God saves Israel through flawed leaders using morally complex methods. How do you hold together God’s goodness with the reality that He works through imperfect people and imperfect systems?
3. Judges presents a repeating cycle of sin, suffering, rescue, and relapse. What might a modern version of this cycle look like in individual lives, churches, or culture today?
4. The judges brought short-term peace, but the people always fell back into bondage. What are the “temporary saviors” people turn to today for peace, identity, or rescue—and how do they ultimately fall short?

Practice For the Week

Daily (2–3 minutes):

Ask God:

1. Where am I asking for relief but resisting change?
2. What do I want fixed without being transformed?

Simply notice—no fixing yet.

One Step This Week:

Take **one small act of obedience** related to what you noticed (a conversation, a boundary, a confession, or a changed habit).

Closing Prayer (end of week):

“God, don’t just rescue me—renew me.

Save me not only from what’s happening to me,
but from what’s happening in me. Amen.”