

## **Judges 3:12-31 – Compromise Leads To Death**

INT, TSK, HebrewLexicon, JFB, Geneva, Trapp, Poole, Henry, Clarke, Barnes, Delitzsch, Gill, Expositor?

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Young people often think short term. They ignore the consequences of their future actions. They tattoo 刺青 themselves. They often make bad marriage choices. They sometimes do not take their studies seriously. They don't always guard what kinds of friends they keep. They like to plan on being more spiritual later in life. They like the present pleasures and life of ease. Later, when it is too late, they realize the consequences of their actions. Then they regret the bad or poor choices they made.

This was quite like Israel. After Joshua, they lived for the present times...the present pleasures and life of ease...and ignored things that really mattered. Soon they were in slavery and could not come out. So God sent Othniel to save them from abuse and to give them peace for 40 years. But when Othniel died the problem started all over again in a worse way. You'll see this today.

Our headings are:

**The Pollution**

**The Punishment**

**The Prayer**

**The Protector**

Our goals are: **That you will guard your minds and hearts against the lure of compromise 妥协 and sin against the Lord, and that you will instead fill your minds and hearts with the assurance of Christ's love** and work hard for his kingdom.

### **The Pollution:**

12 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.

**1. Othniel had secured 40 years of peace, quiet, and prosperity to Israel, but no one took up the reigns to be the shepherd of God's people after.** Maybe he did not prepare anyone to take his place. Whatever the case, his moral and political influence declined and Israel found themselves in trouble again – worse trouble. Israel forgot the great work that God did for them in the past. Take warning: It is so easy to think that God will continue to bless you without the expectation that you must continue in faithfulness. This is the plight 困境 of North America – because things haven't fallen apart completely, the tendency is to think that God will continue to bless.

### **2. From the last time, you will remember that Israel compromised in 3 ways.**

a. **They did not drive out the Canaanites**, choosing to let them live among them.

b. **They intermarried with the pagans.**

c. **They joined these pagans in worship in their temples**, alongside Jehovah, in full scale worshipping of idols. Worshipping idols was easy after joining the family. Joining the family was easy when they were always around.

Now Israel fell into deeper idolatry.

**3. Even as Israel became more sinful, God was strengthening his whip, his rod, against his people, Eglon, King of Moab.**

**4. Do you see how human leaders, because of their limitations of life and limitations of purity, were insufficient to cause man to live godly lives.** So this was ultimately a reminder of how Israel needed to look for the coming Redeemer! This is a reminder how you are to look back at your perfect Redeemer – who teaches you truth, who took your punishment by being your sacrifice, and who rules over you and protects you today.

### **The Punishment**

13 Then he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and Amalek, went and defeated Israel, and took possession of the City of Palms. 14 So the children of Israel served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years.

**1. Eglon, God's rod, gathered Ammon and Amalek in a confederacy 同盟 came against Israel, and defeated them.** But it was God who allowed the confederacy to form against his own people! **Such was his anger!** Israel had become like a rebellious child...who turns and abuses his parents...and hits them...and they have to call the police to get him out of the house!

**2. These 3 nations were the worst enemies of Israel and lived nearer, so the threat was more significant than the king of Mesopotamia. So a defeat by these 3 nations would by have been more ignominious 可耻– ig-noe-min-i-us humiliating.**

**a. Moab was formed by Lot's son who was born through Lot's incest. So the Moabites were relatives of Israel. But Moab had denied Israel passage through their country and caused great suffering for Israel's women and children.** This shamed them. So they had fought and defeated Moab. The truth is, when Israel dwelt in poverty and in tents, but in close relationship with Jehovah, they were stronger and had no fear. But when Israel made their wealth their god they were filled with fear.

**b. Ammon, also the son of Lot.** So Israel were whipped by their own relatives...who did not have Jehovah as their God.

**c. The Amalekites were also relatives of Israel, from the descendants of Esau.** The elect were humiliated.

**2. Moab, Ammon and Amalek, God's instruments of punishment, even took the City of Palms.** It seems that some parts of Jericho were rebuilt and Eglon set up some barracks there. How insulting this must have been! The Canaanites were dead but now worse people were in their places!

**3. The punishment was severer from the previous time, so it is reasonable to conclude that their sins were worse than the first time.** They became subjects of these wicked kings and had to yearly bring tributes 贡品 to Moab. But that was not how it should have been!

Psalms 18:20 The **LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;** According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me.

We say that Israel got their just desserts. Instead of giving their oil and wine to the service of God, they had to take them to their arch-enemies and offer them to Baal. **But God had to destroy the flesh so that the soul might be saved.**

## The Prayer

15 But when **the children of Israel cried** out to the LORD,

**1. It goes without saying that Israel had to return to the Lord and make sacrifices to him – sacrifices that pictured the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. (There is no prayer without sacrifice.)** God doesn't respond to the cry of the wicked – to the Hindu or the Muslim or the Buddhist. God is not a granddaddy who ignores the sins of his grandchildren! He is too holy for that. Yet God obligated himself to forgive covenant breakers who come through Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

**2. This is why today you need to hold on to the better Covenant Keeper who says: "Father, help those poor covenant breakers in Scarborough.** I know they are sinners and break your commands every day and night, but I kept the covenant for them. So honor your covenant promises to them."

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since **He always lives to make intercession for them.**

And the Lord makes this appeal and prayer for you because he was the sacrifice for you!

## The Protector

...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. 16 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.

**1. God raised up Ehud, a Benjamite, who was left-handed.** "Benjamin" means "son of my right hand."

Maybe God wanted you to know that he could save by his power, not man's power. And no one should take credit for what he does.

Psalms 80:17 **Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand,** Upon the son of man *whom* You made strong for Yourself.

Psalms 44:3 For they **did not gain possession of the land by their own sword,** Nor did their own arm save them; **But it was Your right hand,** Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, Because You favored them.

Now Ehud's job was to take the yearly tribute to Eglon.

**2. One time when Ehud was taking the tribute he hid a dagger on his right thigh, as opposed to his left.**

Being ambidextrous 双手灵巧, most people would have looked on his left leg for signs of a weapon. So he went undetected. The dagger was about 18 inches and length. Ehud made the dagger himself so no one would know he had it.

17 So he **brought the tribute** to Eglon king of Moab. (Now Eglon was a very fat man.)

18 And when he had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. 19 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. 20 And 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.** 21 Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the dagger from his right thigh, and **thrust it into his belly.** 22 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.

### **3. Then Ehud destroyed this extremely fat tyrant. Look at the account.**

Ehud brought the yearly tribute to Eglon—the notably fat king, and as he was returning home, he stopped at the stone images.

He told Eglon he had a special message for him. (Lies are appropriate tools of war.)

But why did he wait till he got to Gilgal to make the announcement? Maybe he waited so he could safely send away his fellow Israelites. Maybe it was spiritual zeal...fervor热情 for the Lord. These images could have been idols set up by Ehud, or it could have been the place where Joshua had set up some stones of remembrance.

The king, in his arrogance, thought that Ehud was working for his benefit, and asked to meet with him privately.

Ehud waited when they were alone and announced that the message was from God. He did this so Eglon would stand up.

It would have been difficult to kill him were he sitting down. And then he delivered the message to the tyrant, – all 18 inches of the message...even to the handle of the dagger. **That message: “Stay away from my covenant children.”** No one wants his neighbors to discipline his children. God’s message came to Eglon’s heart, as his ears were closed! Then his excrement (not guts) came out of Ehud. He revelled in fanfare, but now he rested in filth. Eglon died. Because of Eglon’s ego, he became blinded to the danger!

23 Then Ehud went out through the porch and shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them. 24 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." 25 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.

**4. Ehud locked the doors of the room and made a quick escape through the porch.** This gave him time to escape. So when Eglon’s servants came, the door was locked and they assumed he was using the washroom – covering his feet (KJV)—a euphemism委婉 (Men wore skirts like women today.) The writer used soft language to express foul things. So Eglon’s men waited. But when they waited until they knew he had to be finished but he wasn’t, they knew that something was wrong. So they entered and found him dead.

26 But Ehud had escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond the stone images and **escaped to Seirah**. 27 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**. 28 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. 29 And at that time they **killed about ten thousand men of Moab**, all **stout men** of valor; not a man escaped. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the **land had rest for eighty years**. 31 After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed six hundred men of the Philistines with an ox goad; and he also delivered Israel.

**5. Then Ehud escaped with a clean hand and clean heart.** He had done well. He had done the will of God.

And when he returned home to Canaan, he blew the trumpet of victory. He then called on Israel to follow him. What a good leader! He wasn’t a leader from behind. So Israel completed their destruction of Moab, killing 10,000 “fat” soldiers. They were fattened because they dined on Israel’s dime, but they also **because** they dined on Israel’s dime.

**6. On account of Ehud and some other judges, Israel had rest for 80 years.** They remained close to the Lord.

## **7. But look at what happened when these nations thought they could stop the deliverance of God people!**

Any nation that does not submit to Jesus Christ can be sure of their end! Let this give you courage in an age dominated 主导 by Islamic terrorism and totalitarian governments.

Psalm 2:1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

So do not fear as you go out to do battle for the Lord. And remember, you are working for the deliverance of the elect!

### **Conclusion:**

Israel again became polluted in their downward spiral into sin and God sold them into servitude to their worst enemies. After enduring punishment for a long time, they finally prayed for help through their eternal sacrifice for sins, Jesus Christ, and God sent them a protector in Ehud. Ehud saved them temporarily.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

May you **be mindful of how you can fall into sin and compromise**, even as God's covenant children, when you allow yourself to be lured into the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

May you **be filled with God's knowledge of all you have now in Jesus Christ and all you will have in eternity in heaven**.

And may you **learn to enjoy God's gifts today and wait for the eternal joys of heaven**.

May you **work for Christ's kingdom now!**

Finally, while God disciplines the child he loves, if you are not a Christian, you don't have his discipline. You have his destruction over your head. The only thing that would save you is to call upon him for forgiveness – a forgiveness that comes only through Christ's sacrifice on the cross for sinners. Call on him today for this gift!