

## Ehud

My name is Ehud. I was a judge in Israel ruling the nation during a time of persecution by outsiders and unfaithfulness of the people. Actually, that does not narrow it down very much – the scenario happened repeatedly.

The Lord gave the nation over to Eglon, ruler of Moab, whose iron chariots terrorized Israel for 18 years. We lacked both weapons and strategy -- not to mention will -- to counter them. Finally, the people called on the LORD!

The LORD selected me and gave me a task. You may question the way it was carried out, but the providence of the LORD is obvious at every turn. I presented a tribute to Eglon. I had been “patted down” for a sword, which normally would have been on my left side. This is the caution you might expect from an ancient king. Then, when I told him there was a private message, he unexpectedly sent his guards away.

Reaching under my robe with my left hand did not immediately arouse any suspicion although gifts are usually given with the right hand. He would have had a personal weapon since he probably could not even trust his own soldiers.

He was not only off his guard, he was terribly “out of shape” – literally! He was a very fat man and with a single thrust, my sword disappeared into his belly. Then, even though he probably could not have been saved with any sort of help, he unaccountably locked himself in his upper room. His guards were too embarrassed to break in until they finally could wait no longer and found him dead on the floor.

What I did was rightfully called murder, but it was ordered by the LORD. Eglon got justice for his own guilt, despite being the LORD’s instrument to bring Israel to repentance.

To the Moabites it may have appeared to be sorcery that the king had been killed in his own palace. And it must have been shocking that 18 years of submissiveness disappeared when I blew a trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim and the people rallied to me.

The balance of power had not really been altered. Moab still had their chariots but when we unexpectedly rose up and took the fords of the Jordan, we struck down 10,000 of their finest soldiers and they submitted to Israel for 80 years.

Did I do right to use deception and treachery to murder the enemy of my people? Could my example be cited by people using the same techniques for selfish or personal gain? Yes, of course. But did the LORD order me to do so? I have no question in my mind. And was the fact that I am left handed at least part of the reason the LORD chose me? He takes all things into account.