

Othniel and Ehud

Judges 2:10 – 3:31

by Don Falkos

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When the tribes of Israel entered the lands they had been given they were supposed to drive out the current inhabitants. A few of the tribes succeeded in doing so; most did not. The remaining Canaanites became a thorn in the side of Israel. Within a single generation the Israelites abandoned the Lord and worshipped other gods. Their worship included child sacrifice, prostitution, and other extremely lascivious practices.

Israel was subdued by a foreign king. They cried out to the Lord for help. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel, Caleb's nephew. The Lord gave Othniel victory. So there was peace in the land of Israel for forty years.

Again the people of Israel fell into idolatry. Eglon, the king of Moab, took control of the land. The people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help. The Lord gave them a judge, a leader, named Ehud, a left-handed man from the tribe of Benjamin.

The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tribute money to King Eglon. Ehud strapped a long dagger to his right thigh, under his clothes. After delivering the payment, Ehud approached Eglon, who was very fat, and who was sitting alone in a cool upstairs room. Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you!"

As Eglon rose from his seat, Ehud reached under his clothes with his left hand, pulled out the dagger, and plunged it into Eglon's belly. The dagger went so deep that it disappeared beneath the king's fat. Ehud left it there. Then he escaped, issued a call to arms, attacked Moab, and conquered it. So there was peace in the land of Israel for eighty years.