

**Ps 99:8b NLT** You were a forgiving God to them, but you punished them when they went astray. **Heb 4b,5** MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; 6 FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”

Israel is surrounded by warlike enemies to correct & learn war. They've been **complacent**, addicted to ease & luxury, compromised faith, left the Lord for idols of world, turned into **dainty saints**, never endure hardship, **no** grit, **no** drive, **no** vision for the Lord. MH **They must sometimes wade in blood, and not always in milk and honey, These are effeminate men never engaged in struggles MH**

Compromise w/ enemy is to deny Lord-forfeit His power all the while saying **we love the Lord**-no doubt it's why chastening, to kindle again what lies dormant. **Told** to destroy utterly **Dt 7:17-26**. They to be light to nations-**candlestick beaten work**—Shapes character--Jesus says we are light of world--temptation & trials reveal what's inside--weak, whine, give up **or** endure, steady on, give in to Jesus work to shape us. He **tests** us in order to **trust** us—James 1

**1 Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to test Israel by them (that is, all who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan; 2 only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it formerly). 3 These nations are: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites who lived in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. 4 And they were for testing Israel, to find out if they would obey the commandments of the LORD, which He had commanded their fathers through Moses. 5 And the sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites;**

Test to endure hardship for longevity—**run the race w/ endurance** what God has set before them. Not turn back or give up when enemy seems insurmountable, bigger than expected or fear wants to make them turn and run. To find out if faithful—obey what Lord commanded.

*6 and they took their daughters for themselves as wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods. 7 And the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served the Baals and the Asheroth.*

spiritual drift can be imperceptible—before you know it your in dangerous waters & shipwrecked on the reef of compromise. They saw beautiful exotic foreign women, married & ended up serving idols & forgetting God.

Not a suggestion or good advice but Godly principle **2Cor 6:14 KJ** *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?* You put yourself in harms' way—good rarely reforms bad **but** bad corrupts the good. Marriage, business, room-mates—Forgetting God is the road to all sorts of enticements of the world & evil practises.

*8 Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, so that He sold them into the hands of Cushan-rish at haim king of Mesopotamia; and the sons of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. 9 And when the sons of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel to deliver them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.*

First judge-Othniel, we met in Joshua 15 rose to fame Caleb's brother

*'whoever captures Kiriath-sepher give my daughter Achsah in marriage*

King of Mesopotamia *lit between two rivers*—situated between Tigris and Euphrates. God using to chastise--bring to end of self & turn to God.

Marriages & idol worship not what expected—**things turn sour**—trials bring to senses & repentance when **before** they hardly acknowledged God. Need will often drive us to God & God does not reject but responds & delivers.

*10 And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-rish at haim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. 11 Then the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.*

Othniel was not a young man *“far advanced in years”* yet age is no hindrance when God calls & Spirit empowers to do a work for God.

He broke the yoke of the oppressor and freed his people. Result was reformation and rest for 40 years. *Good leadership key.....*

*12 Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD. 13 And he gathered to himself the sons of Ammon and Amalek; and he went and defeated Israel, and they possessed the city of the palm trees. 14 And the sons of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. 15 But when the sons of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a **left-handed** man. And the sons of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab. 16 And Ehud made himself a sword which had two edges, a **cubit** in length; and he bound it on his right thigh under his cloak. 17 And he presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. 18 And it came about when he had finished presenting the tribute, that he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. 19 But he himself turned back from the **idols** which were at **Gilgal**, and said, “I have a secret message for you, O king.” And he said, “Keep silence.” And all who attended him left him. 20 And Ehud came to him while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud said, “I have a message from God for you.” And he arose from his seat. 21 And Ehud stretched out his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh and thrust it into his belly. 22 The handle also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly; and the refuse came out. 23 Then Ehud went out into the vestibule and shut the doors of the roof chamber behind him, and locked them. 24 When he had gone out, his servants came and looked, and behold, the doors of the roof chamber were locked; and they said, “He is only relieving himself in the cool room.” 25 And they waited until they became anxious; but behold, he did not open the doors of the roof chamber. Therefore they took the key and opened them, and behold, their master had fallen to the floor dead. 26 Now Ehud escaped while they were delaying, and he passed by the idols and escaped to Seirah. 27 And it came about when he had arrived, that he blew the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel went down with him from the hill country, and he was in front of them. 28 And he said to them, “Pursue them, for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hands.” So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan opposite Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross. 29 And they struck down at that time about ten thousand Moabites, all robust and valiant men; and no one escaped. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land was undisturbed for eighty years.*

Israel's treadmill of sin & defeat—they cry out & God raises up Ehud. God uses Eglon king of Moab, a nation worst than Israel. **God disciplines his own** not the devils kids. God Disciplines so He might bring them to Himself. Not 8 years like before but 18 years—more harsh w/ harder hearts. Punishment to fit the transgression.

Ehud a Benjamite whose lot w/in the area of city of Jericho where Eglon & nations captured & resided. Israel to bring tribute or offering to Eglon—not to God because of captivity. Sad to serve a master who is not God.

**Left handed** emphasized w/ sword/dagger on right thigh. Usual to take beard w/ right hand & kiss as sign of respect & greeting—less likely to suspect him. Eglon usurped God's throne & became Gods rival & enemy—not assassination but divine justice--death sentence by judge Ehud

Came from Gilgal, :19 graven images set up by Moabites in contempt of God of Israel w/ 12 stones—Stirring up Ehud's anger against oppressors.

Eglon expecting tribute so welcomed Ehud. Then Ehud has secret message from God. **A surprise message a dagger**. So Eglon tho obese & w/ difficulty to to get up from seat to stand, rose in regard to God's message for him. Careful how you listen to God's message—Eglon stood some believers disregard & careless in hearing & obeying what Holy Spirit speaks to them.

Here God avenges his name & his people—today as Christians we are ruthless in using the severe method of the gospel to **cut hearts to the quick** & convict & kill sin w/in that so easily entangles the sinner.

Jesus to Peter put away the sword those who live by the sword will die by the sword.. We have the sword of the spirit the word of God. God's message of mercy, grace & forgiveness to the sinner to find peace w/ God.

80 years of calm & rest. East of Jordan? Moabites—other side SW Philistines oppressed

***31 And after him came Shamgar the son of Anath, who struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad; and he also saved Israel.***

Shamgar raised up & killed 600—song of Deborah *in days Shamgar highways unoccupied* w/ marauders making travel unsafe. God used Shamgar while Ehud still alive.

Not huge numbers that Shamgar defeated to deliver Israel but did it w/ oxgoad or plough-share. It said he was following the plough when Philistines appeared & God put it in his heart to go against them.

But no spear or sword so he used what was at hand. God uses whatever instrument is available to him, you & me. Not ability but availability. Will you make yourself available?

