# A Hero Who's Not a Hero

Brother Marvin Mathis | Judges 3:15-23, 30

**THE BIG IDEA**

God hears His people, can use an unexpected person, and calls us to remain faithful before, during, and after a crisis.

## Lesson Summary

Brother Marvin Mathis teaches the story of Ehud from Judges 3. Israel again turns from God, comes under Eglon's rule, and cries to the Lord for help. God raises Ehud as a deliverer. The class considers both accountability for disobedience and the mercy that makes a return possible. The lesson points to dependence on God rather than repeating a cycle of crisis and forgetfulness.

Ehud is identified as left-handed. Brother Marvin and the class use that detail to discuss how people can overlook someone whose background or abilities seem unusual. Their application is that a label, a difficult beginning, or someone else's assumptions need not define a person's usefulness. The account ends with Ehud leading Israel and the land receiving eighty years of rest.

The discussion also considers pride, discernment, recognizing appropriate help, and hearing God's Word with understanding. Brother Marvin closes by asking for commitment before, during, and after trouble. His audio-and-video comparison calls for prayer and behavior to agree. The final class comments return to consistent faith, honest motives, and putting what we learn into practice.

## Memory Verse

"But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer,"

Judges 3:15 (KJV, excerpt)

The verse continues by naming Ehud, the left-handed Benjamite whom God raised to deliver Israel.

Read the Lesson (NCV) | Memory Verse (KJV) | Lesson recording on YouTube

From the supplied October 18 Sunday School transcript: Brother Marvin Mathis and class discussion. NCV readings: Judges 3:12-30. Memory-verse excerpt: KJV.

# Detailed Lesson Notes

## STUDY OUTLINE

The People Cry Out and God Raises a Deliverer - Judges 3:12-15

God Uses an Unexpected Person - Judges 3:16-23

Deliverance, Rest, and Lasting Commitment - Judges 3:24-30; class application

Key verse: Judges 3:15 (KJV, excerpt)

But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer,

### 1. Notice the repeated turning away

Brother Marvin draws attention to the word again in Judges 3:12. Israel's repeated disobedience leads into a period of oppression. The lesson asks listeners to consider recurring habits and misplaced loyalties, rather than treating each crisis as unrelated to the choices that came before it.

Recording: 0:50-5:32

### 2. Bring both need and responsibility to God

Judges 3:15 records the people crying to God and the raising of Ehud. Brother Marvin and the class discuss mercy alongside consequences. Asking forgiveness does not remove every responsibility to repair what has happened, but need and failure can still be brought honestly before God.

Recording: 5:35-11:02

### 3. Recognize the One who sends help

The discussion explores God's authority and the equipping of the person He sends. The class emphasizes that oppression does not place events beyond His reach. The application is to depend on God and respond to His direction while accepting responsibility for one's own conduct.

Recording: 11:04-13:55

### 4. Do not reduce a person to a label

The biblical account identifies Ehud as left-handed. The class uses this detail to challenge the habit of calling something different a weakness. Brother Marvin applies the point to difficult backgrounds and unfair labels: a person's beginning or another person's perception does not settle what they can become.

Recording: 13:58-19:46

### 5. Read the account with care

Ehud prepares a two-edged dagger, carries it on his right side, and meets Eglon after delivering the tribute. The class notices how Ehud's handedness figures in the narrative. Keep the details of the ancient account distinct from the present-day application about recognizing overlooked abilities.

Recording: 19:47-24:24

### 6. Guard against pride and careless assumptions

As the class reflects on Eglon's private meeting with Ehud, the discussion turns to pride, greed, and discernment. These are reflections on the account, rather than additional motives stated in the passage. The practical question is whether confidence or desire is preventing us from listening carefully.

Recording: 24:25-32:43

# Recognize Help and Remain Faithful

### 7. Recognize help that meets the actual need

Brother Marvin asks what help looks like and answers that it depends on what the situation requires. The class discusses food for hunger, clothing for cold, and help that arrives without an expected appearance. Listen to the person's need rather than assuming one response fits every situation.

Recording: 32:47-36:57

### 8. Remember the outcome of deliverance

The passage records Eglon's death and Ehud's escape, followed by Israel's defeat of Moab. Judges 3:30 closes with eighty years of rest. Brother Marvin also invites the class to examine burdens and influences that can distract people from recognizing what is happening in their lives.

Recording: 37:12-40:54

### 9. Seek understanding and put it into practice

The closing discussion stresses hearing, understanding, and practicing the Word. The class warns against being satisfied with an impressive presentation while missing its meaning. Consistent conduct, honest motives, and thoughtful application matter beyond the moment in which the teaching is heard.

Recording: 41:54-46:58; 48:30-53:26

### 10. Stay committed before, during, and after

Brother Marvin asks whether faithfulness will continue when circumstances improve. He calls listeners to avoid waiting for pain before praying or changing course. His audio-and-video comparison asks for words and actions to agree: pray with trust, and let daily conduct reflect the commitment being expressed.

Recording: 47:00-48:28

# Life Application

- Identify a recurring choice that draws you away from God. Take a concrete step to change it and seek accountability.

- If your actions caused harm, ask forgiveness and consider what repair or responsibility is still needed.

- Encourage someone whose abilities or background others overlook. Recognize a specific strength they bring.

- Ask what help a person actually needs before deciding how you will respond.

- Choose a daily practice of prayer, Scripture reading, or service that you will keep during both difficult and comfortable times.

## Prayer and Personal Reflection

Lord, thank You for hearing us and showing mercy. Help us turn from repeated wrong choices and take responsibility for our actions. Teach us to recognize the gifts You place in people and the help You make available. Give us understanding as we study Your Word, and let our actions agree with our prayers. Keep us faithful before, during, and after every difficult season. In Jesus' name, Amen.

What will you practice this week so that your actions match your prayers, even when there is no crisis?

### ONE COMMITMENT FOR THIS WEEK

My commitment: _____

My next step: _____

Read the Lesson (NCV) | Memory Verse (KJV) | Lesson recording on YouTube

# Sunday School Questions

Name: _____ Date: _____

Choose one answer for each question. Use the website to submit your answers and reflection privately to the church.

**1. Whom did the Lord raise as a deliverer when Israel cried for help in Judges 3:15?**

A. Eglon
B. Saul
C. Ehud
D. Pharaoh

**2. How did the class apply the fact that Ehud was left-handed?**

A. Different abilities make a person useless
B. God can use a person whom others overlook
C. Everyone must have exactly the same abilities
D. A person's background determines every future choice

**3. How long did the land have rest at the end of Judges 3:30?**

A. Eight years
B. Eighteen years
C. Forty years
D. Eighty years

**4. What did the class emphasize about mercy and consequences?**

A. God hears prayer, while responsibility and consequences may still need to be faced
B. An apology removes every need to repair harm
C. Consequences mean it is pointless to pray
D. Accountability applies only to other people

**5. What commitment did Brother Marvin call for in his closing application?**

A. Pray only when a problem becomes painful
B. Stop learning once life becomes comfortable
C. Remain committed before, during, and after a crisis
D. Let words replace the need for faithful actions

**6. EXTRA CREDIT - What comparison did Brother Marvin use to say that prayer and behavior should agree?**

A. Our calendar should match our clock
B. Our audio should match our video
C. Our shoes should match our shirt
D. Our map should match our luggage