



Spring Study Discussion Guide #4

Sermon Title: Killing the Fat Man

Biblical Reference: Judges 3:1-6, 3:12-30

Date Preached: Sunday, February 5th, 2023, @ 11am

Fall Study Date: Wednesday, February 8th, 2023

Ice Breaker

To get to know each other as a group let us go around the room and have everyone answer the ice breaker question.

If you could meet any historical figure, who would it be and why?

Sermon Summary

This past Sunday we learned how God brought the disobedient children of Israel back into a right relationship with Himself. The book of Judges covers a period of approximately 410 years. During this time, we see a continuing cycle of God's people falling into immorality and idolatry. These sins would result in a time of oppression, bondage, and slavery. Sin never advances anyone; it sets them back.

When the children of Israel experienced the negative effects of their sin, they would cry out to the Lord. In mercy, God would intervene by sending them a leader (judge). The judge would help in defeating their enemy. This would lead to a time of peace and prosperity. However, they would soon forget their history and fall back into the same sins and the cycle would repeat. The judge we studied was a man named Ehud and God used him to help them overcome Eglon king of Moab. Eglon enjoys a large representation among the enemy kings. Owing to his physical attributes, Eglon is a standout, and weighs more heavily on our minds. He was a very fat man.

Paul said the Old Testament stories were written for our learning. We can learn much from this story about how God works in our lives today. We see the ways God leads us out of the bondage of sin by helping us defeat our enemies. All of us face three main enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil. Eglon is a picture of our enemies. God will help us, like He helped Ehud, to kill our "fat man."

Quick Review

Ask a volunteer to read:

Jdg Jdg 3:12 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

Jdg 3:13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees.

Jdg 3:14 So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

Jdg 3:15 But when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man lefthanded: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.

Jdg 3:16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.

Jdg 3:17 And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man.

Jdg 3:18 And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present.

Jdg 3:19 But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him.

Jdg 3:20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat.

Jdg 3:21 And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly:

Jdg 3:22 And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.

- Were there any insights the Lord showed you or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you? Either from the sermon or from your personal study of this passage?
- How did the Holy Spirit speak to your heart from this passage/sermon?

My Testimony

After eighteen years of oppression. The children of Israel cried unto the Lord, and He sent them Ehud. God used him to bring a time of peace and prosperity to the people.

- Tell us about the “Ehud” God used in your life to help you achieve a great victory. (This is a person you believe the Lord sent to mentor or greatly encourage you in your walk with God.)

Digging Deeper

1. We Have Problems

In the following verses we see God using the problems of the enemies to benefit the children of Israel. He was able to teach them things they could have never learned in a time of peace and prosperity. We also see God using their disobedience and turning it to their good.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Jdg 3:1 Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan;

Jdg 3:2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;

Jdg 3:3 Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath.

Jdg 3:4 And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

Discussion Questions:

- What is most significant to you in this passage? Please explain.
- Have you known people that have lived through or experienced war? What differences have you noticed about them?
- What disadvantages do people have that have always been on “Easy Street”?
- Can you give us an example of how disobedience brought a problem into your life, but God used it to teach you how to overcome?
- Read verse 3:4a. Imagine every time you faced a temptation you heard God say to an angel. “Watch, this will prove what I have been telling you about him.” Describe what effect you think this would have?

- Can you explain why Christians are unaware of the gravity of their choices?

2. We Have Enemies

In the following verses we learn that when we do evil, our enemies gain strength against us. When we indulge the flesh, listen to the world, and give place to the devil the inner man becomes weak, and the enemy's advantage is strengthened. Our enemies often work in harmony against us.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Jdg 3:12 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

Jdg 3:13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees.

Jdg 3:14 So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

Discussion Questions:

- What, in this passage, is the most significant to you? Please explain.
- The city of palm trees refers to Jericho. Imagine the Taliban setting up headquarters in the alamo. Describe the effect habitual (undefeated) sin has had on your sense of wellbeing?
- Which of the three enemies (the world, the flesh, the devil) do you believe causes you the most trouble?
- How does the "world" effect Christians in our culture?

3. We All Serve

In the following verses you find what it looks like to serve the enemy. The children of Israel served Eglon by paying him tribute or a tax. They gave to Eglon their present substance that should have been given to God.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Jdg 3:12 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

*Jdg 3:13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and **smote** Israel, and **possessed** the city of palm trees.*

*Jdg 3:14 So the children of Israel **served** Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.*

*Jdg 3:17 And he brought the **present** unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man.*

Discussion Questions:

- What are some things we can take from these verses to determine if we are serving the enemy?
- Can you explain what it looks like when you take things meant for God and give them to the enemy?
- How can we be more effective helping people give their gifts to God?
- For eighteen years they took to Eglon the things that should have been given to God. What comes to your mind when you think about the years you served an enemy?
- What advice/warning would you give a person about giving years to the enemy?

4. We Need a Strategy

In the following verses we see the strategy that Ehud used to defeat the enemy. We can use this same strategy to defeat our enemies.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Jdg 3:16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.

Jdg 3:20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat.

Jdg 3:21 And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly:

Jdg 3:22 And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.

Discussion Questions:

- What, in this passage, is the most significant to you? Please explain.
- Verse 16 represents a significant investment of time, energy, and resources. Can you explain what the dagger represents and how this relates to us?
- Do you have a hard time consistently reading the Bible? If you have a hard time consistently reading, why do you believe this is?
- If you have a good devotional life can you tell us how you grew into that?
- Verse 20 says the dirt came out when the dagger went in. Can you tell us what effects reading the Bible has had on your sanctification process?
- Verse 20 shows the enemy Eglon who would not move for Ehud moved when the message was from God. Tell us a way God used His Word in your life to give you the authority and strength you needed to overcome your enemies?
- Ehud had to face the enemy alone. He was the only one that was commissioned by God to defeat Eglon. Can you explain why this is important?

Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they can do because of discovering the truths and principles in the text:

1. What truth or principle in this text was most impactful for you?
2. How did this truth or principal challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. How will you put into practice what you have learned today?