

5-Day Devotional: Killing Sin, Finding Freedom

Day 1: The Cycle Stops Here

Read: Judges 3:12-15

Reflect: "The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." That word "again" stings, doesn't it? Israel fell into a predictable pattern: sin, oppression, crying out, deliverance—then back to sin. For 18 years they lived under King Eglon's rule before finally saying "enough is enough."

How long is long enough? Maybe you've been battling the same sin for years, thinking God can't possibly forgive you again. But notice: God waited for them to cry out, then "the Lord raised up for them a deliverer." He didn't have to. He chose to. That's grace.

Apply: What sin cycle has you trapped? Today, stop making excuses. Call it what God calls it: evil in His sight. Then cry out to Him.

Pray: *"Lord, I've been stuck in this cycle too long. I'm tired of feeding what oppresses me. Hear my cry. I need Your deliverance. Amen."*

Day 2: Stop Feeding the Tyrant

Read: Romans 8:13

Reflect: Israel kept King Eglon fat with annual tribute—paying the very tyrant who oppressed them. That's exactly what we do with sin. We feed our lustful thoughts. We nurture our pride. We give energy to anger, gossip, and selfishness. Then we wonder why these things have such power over us.

"If you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." God's solution isn't management—it's death. Not self-improvement, but Spirit-empowered execution.

What are you still feeding? That relationship you know dishonors God? That entertainment that fuels temptation? That grudge you rehearse daily? Stop paying tribute.

Apply: Identify one way you're "feeding" your sin today. Cut off its supply. Delete the app.

Block the number. Confess to a friend.

Pray: *"Father, show me what I'm still feeding. Give me courage to starve sin and feast on You instead. Amen."*

Day 3: Your Weakness, His Weapon

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Reflect: Ehud was left-handed in a right-handed world—a Benjamite (meaning "son of my right hand") who couldn't use his right hand. He likely felt disqualified, overlooked, inadequate. Yet God chose him as the deliverer, using his very weakness to defeat the enemy.

God doesn't need your strength. He specializes in using surrendered weakness. Paul's thorn in the flesh. Moses' stuttering. Your past failure, your present struggle, your painful limitation—none of it disqualifies you. God says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Stop waiting until you're "strong enough" to serve God. A yielded left hand is mightier than a rebellious right.

Apply: What weakness makes you feel unqualified? Surrender it to God today. Ask Him to use it for His glory.

Pray: *"Lord, I offer You my weakness. Use what I thought disqualified me to bring You glory and set others free. Amen."*

Day 4: Wield the Right Weapon

Read: Hebrews 4:12

Reflect: Ehud crafted an 18-inch, double-edged sword and hid it under his clothes until the crucial moment. God's Word is your double-edged sword—"sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit."

You can't kill sin with willpower alone. You need Scripture. When temptation whispers, wield the Word: *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word."* STAB. *"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to man. God is faithful—he will provide a way of escape."* STAB. *"Flee sexual immorality."* STAB.

The enemy flees when met with Scripture. But you must know it, memorize it, keep it ready.

Apply: Choose one verse that speaks directly to your struggle. Write it down. Memorize it. Use it as your weapon this week.

Pray: *"Lord, make Your Word alive in me. When sin attacks, bring Scripture to my mind. Make me quick to stab back. Amen."*

Day 5: Remember God's Faithfulness

Read: Joshua 4:20-24

Reflect: Before Ehud killed King Eglon, he traveled to Gilgal—where 12 stones stood as monuments to God's faithfulness. Those stones reminded Israel: *God dried up the Red Sea. He stopped the Jordan River. He delivers His people.*

Ehud saw two things at Gilgal: Eglon's idols (the problem) and God's memorial stones (His proven faithfulness). Remembering God's past deliverance gave him courage for present battle.

What stones of remembrance do you have? When has God rescued you before? From addiction? Depression? A toxic relationship? Remember. Because the God who delivered you then can deliver you now.

Apply: Find a physical stone. Place it somewhere visible. Let it remind you: "This is the day God set me free."

Pray: *"Father, thank You for every time You've rescued me. I remember Your faithfulness. Give me courage to believe You'll deliver me again. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

Blog: When "Enough Is Enough" Becomes Your Battle Cry

Reflections on Ehud, Sin, and the God Who Delivers

Eighteen years.

That's how long the Israelites lived under the oppressive rule of King Eglon of Moab. Eighteen years of paying tribute to a tyrant. Eighteen years of feeding the very man who enslaved them. Eighteen years until somebody finally said, "Enough is enough."

That somebody was Ehud—a left-handed man from the tribe of Benjamin (ironic, since Benjamin means "son of my right hand"). The man who felt inadequate became God's unlikely deliverer.

The Uncomfortable Truth About Sin

The story in Judges 3 is rated R for a reason—violence, gluttony, bathroom humor, and assassination. It's uncomfortable. Which is exactly the point.

Sin is uncomfortable. God wants us to feel that.

We've become experts at downplaying our sin. We call it a "mistake" or a "struggle" or a "gray area." We say things like "I'm working on it" or "It's not hurting anyone." But God calls it what it is: **"The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord"** (Judges 3:12).

Not evil in society's sight. Not evil according to our personal convictions. Evil in **God's sight**. That's the only opinion that matters.

And here's what sin does: it oppresses. It rules. It demands tribute. You keep paying—with your peace, your relationships, your integrity, your witness—and it's never satisfied. Like King Eglon, sin gets fatter while you get weaker.

The Cycle We Know Too Well

The Book of Judges shows us seven cycles of sin, and Ehud's story is the second:

1. **Israel sins** (worships idols, turns from God)
2. **God allows oppression** (King Eglon rules for 18 years)
3. **Israel cries out** (repentance, desperation)
4. **God sends a deliverer** (Ehud)
5. **There is rest** (80 years of peace)
6. **The deliverer dies**
7. **The cycle starts again**

Sound familiar?

You conquer a sin, experience freedom, then months (or years) later find yourself back under its rule. The walls of Jericho have fallen before, yet here you are again paying tribute in the City of Palms.

Three Truths from Ehud's Story

1. Stop Feeding What Oppresses You

Israel kept King Eglon fat with annual tribute. We do the same with our sin. We feed our lustful thoughts with entertainment choices. We nurture pride with constant self-focus. We fuel anger by rehearsing offenses.

Romans 8:13 doesn't mince words: **"If you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."**

God's solution isn't sin management—it's execution. Kill it. Starve it. Stop giving your time, attention, and energy to what enslaves you.

Some of us need to have a funeral for our sin. When Eglon's servants finally opened that locked door, they found their lord dead on the floor. What would change in your life if you walked in and found your sin—that controlling habit, that toxic pattern, that secret shame—dead on the floor?

It's time to stop feeding the tyrant.

2. Even in Your Weakness, Wield God's Weapon

Ehud was left-handed—likely with a deformed or unusable right hand. In ancient Israel, this was a serious disadvantage. Warriors wore their swords on the left hip and drew with their right hand. Positions of honor were on the right. Everything favored the right-handed.

But God used Ehud's weakness as the key to victory. Because he was left-handed, Ehud bound his 18-inch sword to his right thigh—exactly where guards wouldn't search a right-handed man. His "disability" became his advantage.

God specializes in using surrendered weakness.

Maybe you think your past disqualifies you. Your struggle is too great. Your failure too recent. Your limitation too obvious. But God says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

A yielded left hand is mightier than a rebellious right.

And Ehud didn't just rely on his weakness—he wielded the right weapon. That double-edged sword did what needed doing. God's Word is your double-edged sword, "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit" (Hebrews 4:12).

When temptation attacks, fight back with Scripture:

- *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word."*

STAB.

- *"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape."* **STAB.**
- *"Flee sexual immorality."* **STAB.**
- *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation."* **STAB.**

You can't kill sin with willpower alone. You need the sword.

3. Remember God's Faithfulness to Rescue

Here's the detail I initially missed: Before Ehud killed King Eglon, he walked two miles to Gilgal—then turned back.

Why? The text tells us he saw the idols Eglon had erected. But he would have seen something else too: **twelve memorial stones**.

When Joshua led Israel across the Jordan River into the Promised Land, God dried up the water just as He had the Red Sea. Joshua commanded the people to take twelve stones from the riverbed and stack them at Gilgal as a memorial. He said:

"When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord... So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever" (Joshua 4:6-7).

Ehud stood at Gilgal and saw two things: Eglon's idols (the problem) and God's memorial stones (His proven faithfulness).

Remembering God's past deliverance gave him courage to face the present enemy.

Your Gilgal Moment

What stones of remembrance do you have?

- The addiction He broke
- The depression He lifted
- The relationship He redeemed
- The prodigal He brought home
- The diagnosis He healed
- The debt He cancelled

When you're tempted to think God can't deliver you from *this* sin, remember your stones. The

God who parted the Red Sea, stopped the Jordan River, and sent His Son to die for you **can set you free today.**

All the judges in the Book of Judges point to the ultimate Deliverer: Jesus Christ. And because of Christ, you don't have to live under sin's tyranny another day.

What Stone Will You Set Today?

Pastor Dan suggested something powerful: Find a stone. A big one. Place it in your backyard or on your mantle. Let it mark the day you said "enough is enough." Because one day your kids will ask, "Mom, Dad—what's that stone all about?"

And you'll say, "That's the day God delivered me. That's the day I killed that sin. That's the day I remembered God is faithful. And He can deliver you too."

Eighteen years of oppression led to eighty years of peace.

How long is long enough for you?

Maybe today—Father's Day 2026, or whatever day you're reading this—maybe today is your Gilgal moment. The day you remember God's faithfulness, pick up your sword, and say to that sin that's ruled you for far too long:

"Enough is enough."

The God who delivered Israel through Ehud is the same God who sent Jesus to deliver you from sin and death. Cry out to Him. He is faithful. And He specializes in using weak, left-handed, unlikely people to do His greatest work.

Stop feeding what oppresses you.

Wield God's weapon.

Remember His faithfulness.

Your deliverance starts now.