

How a Nation Unravels: The Book of Judges

Lesson 5

Judges 8:22-35

February 6, 2022

The Perils of Success

Introduction

With God's help, Gideon was able to accomplish so much in his life, and the Israelites were incredibly grateful for what he had done—to the point that they were ready to make him their king. But Gideon did the right thing and reminded the people of Israel that God was their only ruler.

However, as Israel entered a long period of peace, we see Gideon, and all of Israel, begin to fall away from God. And as we come to the end of Gideon's life, we are reminded of how easy it is to fall away from God.

How much are we like the Israelites? Like the Israelites, when life gets hard, we turn to God to rescue us. But when we enter periods of peace and life gets easy, like the Israelites, it's easy to become complacent in our walk with God.

Memory verse: "But Gideon told them, 'I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The Lord will rule over you.'"—Judges 8:23

Pray and read Judges 8:22-35. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

What does the passage say?

1. What did the Israelites say to Gideon? (Judges 8:22)

2. What was Gideon's response to the request? (Judges 8:23-24)

3. What did Gideon do with the gold earrings? What did the Israelites do with the item Gideon made from the earrings? (Judges 8:27)

4. How long did the Israelites have peace? (Judges 8:28)

5. What happened to Gideon after he died? (Judges 8:32)

6. What did the Israelites do after Gideon's death? (Judges 8:33-35)

What does the passage mean?

1. Gideon and the Israelites fell into the trap of temptation. How can we trust that God will help us with our temptations? (Matthew 26:41; 1 Corinthians 10:13; James 1:13-14; 1 Peter 5:8-9)

2. Gideon is a reminder that we need to continue to rely on God's strength, even in our weakness. Why is God so important when we are weak? (Isaiah 41:10; Romans 8:26; Hebrews 4:15-16; Philippians 4:13; 2 Corinthians 12:9)

3. After Gideon's great successes under God's guidance, he began to be tempted by the riches and power available to him. What warnings are we given about the temptation of the things in this world? (Matthew 6:19-21; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:2; 1 Peter 2:11; 1 John 2:15-17)

4. Once Gideon died, the people of Israel turned away from God once again and began to worship Baal. Why is it so important to seek wisdom from God whether we are in a leadership position or being led? (Hosea 14:9; Ephesians 5:6-10; Hebrews 5:14; James 1:5; 1 John 4:1)

3. What temptations draw you away from God? Write a prayer asking God to take control of those temptations.