
JUDGES
The Search for a Better Savior & Renewal that Lasts
PENINSULA community CHAPEL

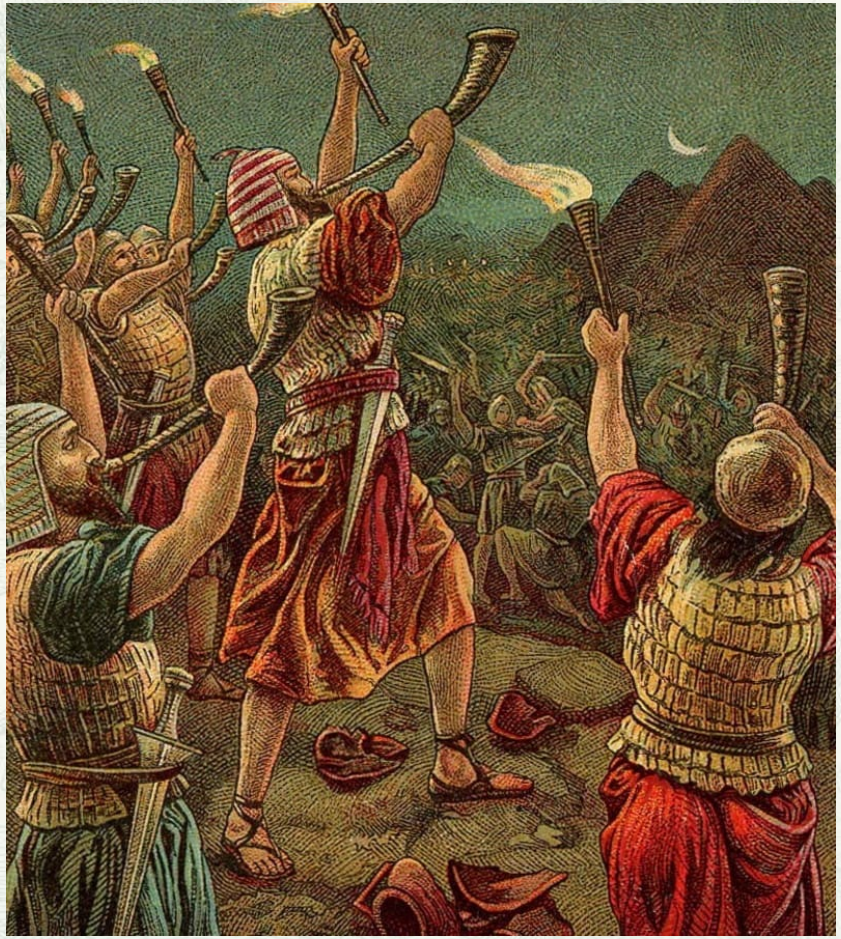





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The Danger of Success
Lessons from the Rise and Fall of Gideon
Judges 7-8



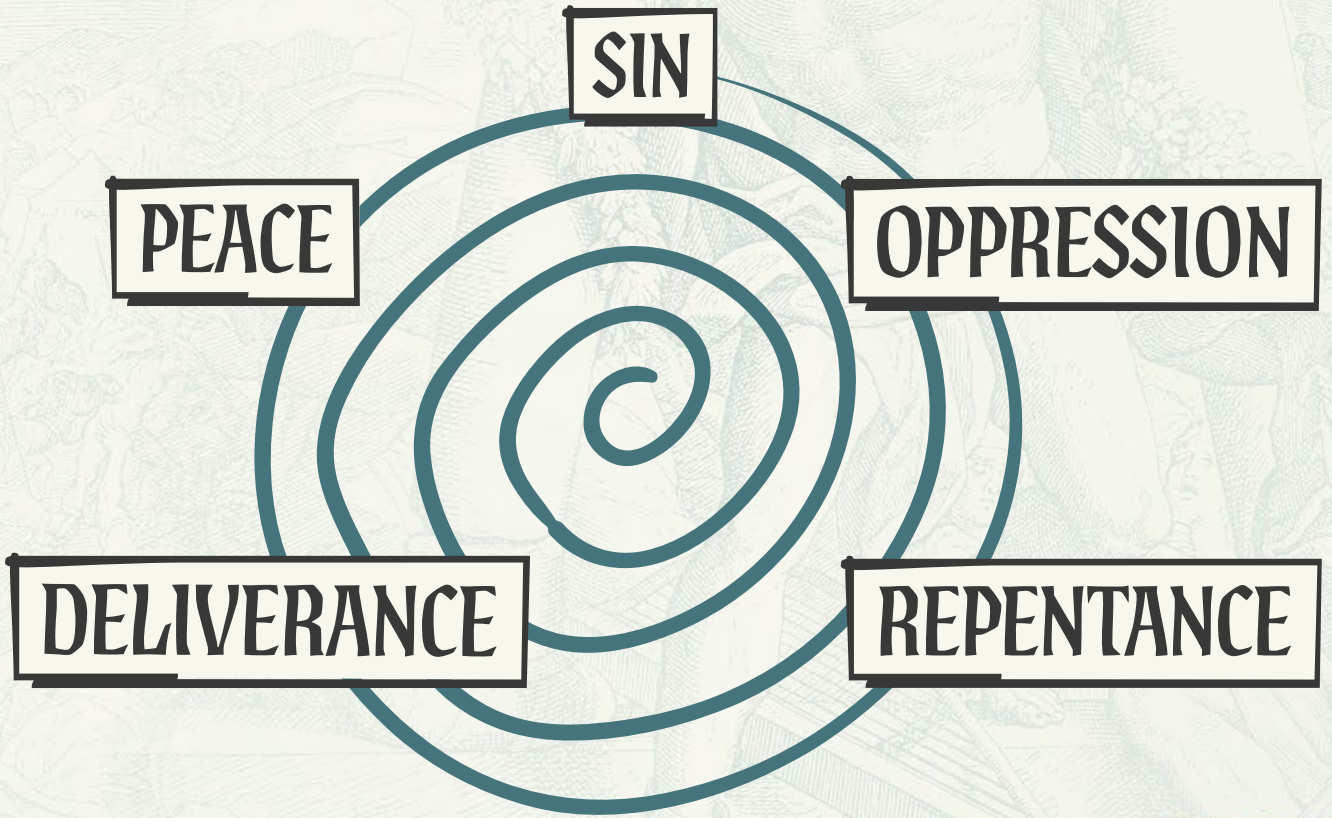
And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of *Gideon*, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— *who through faith…were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.*
Hebrews 11:32-34 (ESV)

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The Book of Judges

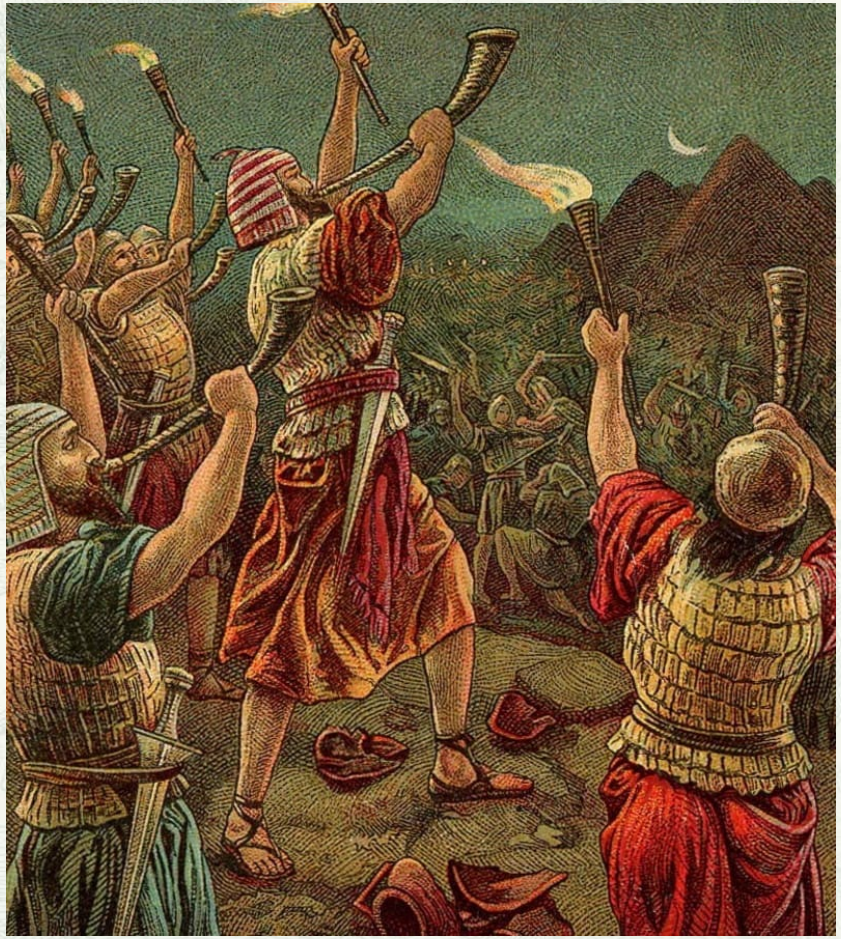
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The Search for a Better Savior & Renewal that Lasts

The Danger of Success
Lessons from the Rise and Fall of Gideon
Judges 7-8



God's power is best displayed through our weakness.

1. The Rise of Gideon – Chapter 7
2. The Fall of Gideon – Chapter 8

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The Rise of Gideon – Judges 7

2 The LORD said to Gideon, “The people with you are too many
for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast
over me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’ 3 Now therefore
proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, ‘Whoever is fearful
and trembling, let him return home and hurry away from
Mount Gilead.’” Then 22,000 of the people returned, and
10,000 remained.
Judges 7:2-3

Midianites Forces	Israelites	Ratio
135,000	32,000	4 to 1
135,000	10,000	14 to 1

The Rise of Gideon – Judges 7

4 And the LORD said to Gideon, “The people are still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there, and anyone of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ shall go with you, and anyone of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ shall not go.”
Judges 7:4



Midianites Forces	Israelites	Ratio
135,000	32,000	4 to 1
135,000	10,000	14 to 1
135,000	300	450 to 1!

The Rise of Gideon – Judges 7

13 When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to
his comrade. And he said, “Behold, I dreamed a dream, and
behold, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of
Midian and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and
turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat.” 14 And his
comrade answered, “This is no other than the sword of
Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given into
his hand Midian and all the camp.”
15 As soon as Gideon heard the telling
of the dream and its interpretation,
he worshiped.
Judges 7:13-15



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The Rise of Gideon – Judges 7



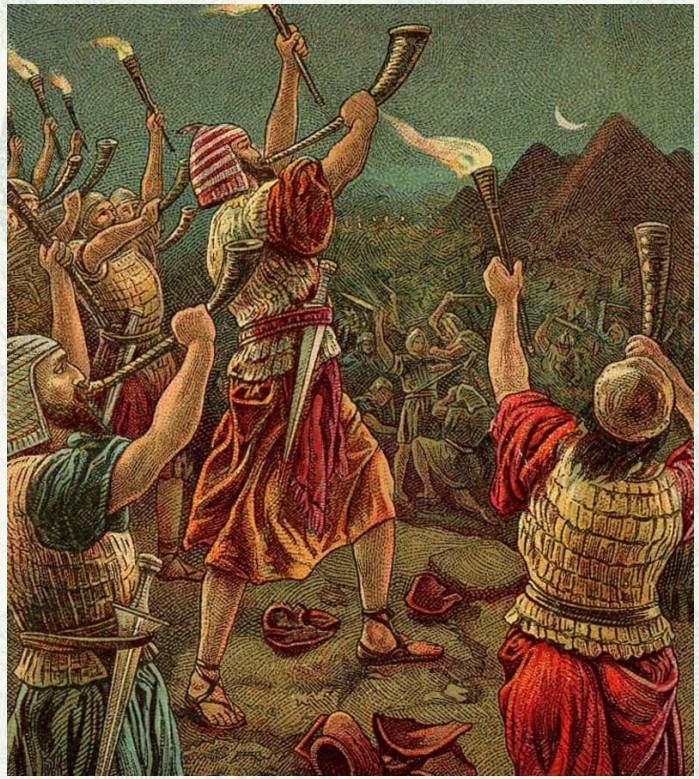
20 Then the three companies blew the
trumpets and broke the jars. They held
in their left hands the torches, and in
their right hands the trumpets to blow.
And they cried out, “A sword for the
LORD and for Gideon!” 21 Every man
stood in his place around the camp,
and all the army ran. They cried out and
fled. 22 When they blew the 300
trumpets, the LORD set every man's
sword against his comrade and against
all the army. And the army fled…
Judges 7:20-22a

The Rise of Gideon – Judges 7

<u>God's power displayed through weakness:</u>

1) The reduction of the troops
2) The chosen leader
3) The God-given victory





Midianites Forces	Israelites	Ratio
135,000	32,000	4 to 1
135,000	10,000	14 to 1
135,000	300	450 to 1!

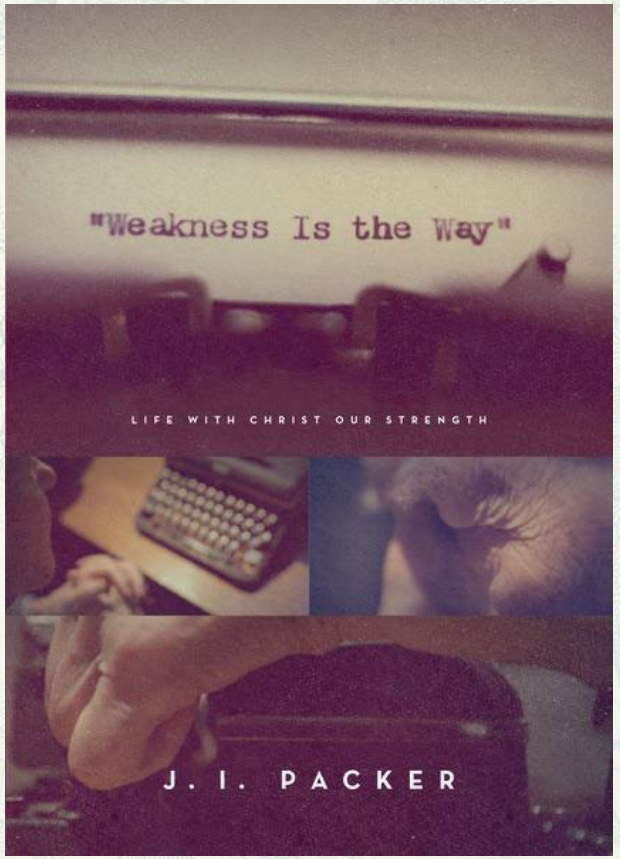
The Rise of Gideon – Judges 7

7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

The Rise of Gideon – Judges 7

Weakness is the Way
Life with Christ Our Strength
J.I. Packer



- Weakness is a normal part of the Christian life
- Our identity is built on Christ, not the strength of our accomplishments
- God's goodness and faithfulness are not dependent on our *feeling* strong
- Feeling weak leads to depend on Christ and proves his sufficiency

The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8



Judges 8:1-21

- Conflict with Ephraim, Succoth, & Penuel



- The Midianite Kings are captured and dealt with

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The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

22 Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, you
and your son and your grandson also, for you have saved us
from the hand of Midian.” 23 Gideon said to them, “I will not
rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will
rule over you.” 24 And Gideon said to them, “Let me make a
request of you: every one of you give me the earrings from his
spoil.” (For they had golden earrings, because they were
Ishmaelites.) 25 And they answered, “We will willingly give
them.” And they spread a cloak, and every man threw in it
the earrings of his spoil.
Judges 8:22-25

The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

[26] And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested
was 1,700 shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments
and the pendants and the purple garments worn by the
kings of Midian, and besides the collars that were around the
necks of their camels. [27] And Gideon made an ephod of it and
put it in his city, in Ophrah. And all Israel whored after it there,
and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family. [28] So
Midian was subdued before the people of Israel, and they
raised their heads no more. And the land had rest for forty
years in the days of Gideon.
Judges 8:26-28

The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

Gideon focuses on his power & glory

- Bitter interaction with fellow Israelites and Midianite Kings
- Collection of tribute to increase personal riches
- Makes a counterfeit ephod that “all Israel whored after…”
- Takes many wives
- Names one son Abimelech, which means “My Father is king”



The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

<u>Lessons from Gideon's fall</u>

1. There is a difference between professed beliefs and functional beliefs.
2. Be aware of the spiritual dangers of doing good.
3. Give God the glory for your victories.



The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

<u>Give God the glory for victories</u>

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, *so that no one may boast*.
Ephesians 2:8-9

…so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”
1 Corinthians 1:31

The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

<u>What do you boast in?</u>

Financial success?

Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’ You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth…
Deuteronomy 8:17-18

The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

<u>What do you boast in?</u>

Grades or education?

Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me…
Jeremiah 9:23-24a

The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

What do you boast in?

Religious devotion?

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
Philippians 2:12

The Fall of Gideon – Judges 8

<u>What do you boast in?</u>

Identify where you boast in yourself

- What do you focus on when you compare yourself with others? Wealth, status, attractiveness, intellect, religious devotion, personality, or skills?

Confess to God and others

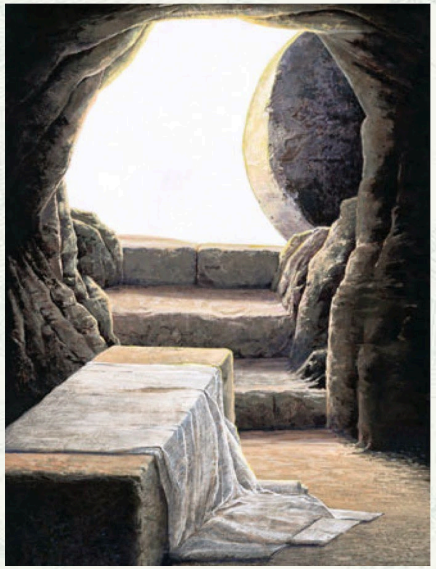
Repent

- Develop a habit of thanksgiving to train your heart in how to boast in the Lord

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