

### **Recap of 6/18/17 (Judges 8:4-32):**

1. In the aftermath of Gideon's victory over the Midianites and their allies (the "mopping up" operations) Gideon encounters challenges from his own fellow Israelites. He handles the Ephraimites with diplomacy and humility. The men of Succoth and Peniel are a different story altogether. They outright refuse to help Gideon and his 300 men. They were hedging their bets, allying themselves with Midian, betting against Gideon's ultimate victory. In effect they were betting against God. Instead of help they offered ridicule and contempt, and outright traitorous behavior. Treating them like the traitors they were, Gideon carried out his threatened retaliation.
2. Ultimately through God's intervention on Israel's behalf, Midian was subdued and Israel enjoyed 40 years of peace under Gideon.
3. Despite all the good he had done, Gideon's story ends on a sour note. He rightly refused the offer to begin a ruling dynasty, pointing out that God would rule over Israel. However, he requests a share of the booty out of which he made a 43 pound gold ephod (which later became a snare to Israel and was used as an object of false worship), and the purple garments of kings (vs. 26). He acquires many wives (a king's "harem") and names one of his sons Abimelech, which means "my father is king."
4. Two warnings which come out of Gideon's story are:
  - we can inadvertently build monuments to human accomplishments, forgetting God.
  - we must humbly realize that we don't know how we'll finish. Will we finish well, or will we foolishly throw it all away? The prayer of Bible teacher, evangelist, author, pastor, and professor, Harry A. Ironside, should provoke us all to be watchful of our choices in life: "O God, keep me from becoming a foolish old man!"
5. "The consequences of Gideon's private life did perhaps more damage for the nation than whatever public good he had done. No matter who you are moral flaws can cause lasting problems, even if we think they're 'private.' (Our private sins can leave public consequences even if we've been faithful in other parts of life. We need to be constantly watchful against temptation and root out sin wherever it appears. Sometimes Satan's strongest attacks come in the quiet that follows a great victory." (NLT One-Year Study Bible)