

Study Guide for Sept. 12th, 2010. An Unlikely Outcome: Judges 8

Intro.: When has some leader proven to be a great disappointment after initial promise?

1. Conflict Avoided: Judges 8:1-3
 - a) What the Ephraimites had been asked to do? (7:24) What did they do? (Vs. 25)
 - b) What does the accusation by the Ephraimites reveal about Israel at this time?
 - c) What is meant by the saying, “The gleanings of Ephraim’s grapes are greater than the full grape harvest of Abiezer”?
 - d) Prov. 15:1 states, “A gentle answer turns away wrath.” Apply to Gideon and us.

2. Assistance Denied: Judges 8:4-9
 - a) How are Gideon and his troops described?
 - b) What request does Gideon make in Succoth and in Peniel? What is the response?
 - c) Why do you think the officials of Succoth and Peniel refused to supply Gideon?
 - d) What does this response reveal about Israel at this time?

3. Victory Completed: Judges 8:10-12
 - a) Compare and contrast the forces of Gideon with the remaining Midianite army.
 - b) When does this battle occur? What is the outcome?
 - c) Recall the words of the angel of the Lord to Gideon. (6:16) What can we learn?

4. Vengeance Carried Out: Judges 8:13-17
 - a) How does Gideon identify the leaders of Succoth? How does he punish them?
 - b) What does Gideon do to the city of Peniel?
 - c) What does this reveal about Gideon and Israel at this time?

5. Kings Executed: Judges 8:18-21
 - a) What is the point of Gideon’s question? What seems to be Gideon’s motive?
 - b) What command does Gideon give to his son? Who ultimately does the act?
 - c) What is the last action of Gideon? What does this reveal about him?
 - d) Do you view this episode as an act of God’s justice or Gideon’s personal revenge?

6. Kingship offered . . . and denied: Judges 8:22-27
 - a) What do the people request of Gideon? Why? What is Gideon’s response?
 - b) What does Gideon request from the people? What does Gideon do with this?
 - c) Compare the actions of Gideon with that of Aaron (Ex. 32:1-6). What is the result?

7. Death and Decline: Judges 8:28-35
 - a) How is Gideon’s life summarized? What were the effects?
 - b) How do the people of Israel act after Gideon has died?
 - c) What lasting lessons can you draw from this story?