



Judges Chapter 8

- Review/Intro
 - Last week Gideon defeated his enemies but this didn't immediately mean everything was perfectly fine in Israel
- Ephraim
 - The men of Ephraim joined the battle, but were upset that they weren't called until later
 - If you remember, the Midianites were a problem for Israel for the past 7 years, so if they wanted to fight them at any time they could have.
 - Also the battle wasn't won because of a large army in the first place, it was won by the Lord and 300 men
- Gideon's response
 - Gideon was humble in the way he responded to the tribe of Ephraim
 - A soft answer turns away wrath (Proverbs 15:1)
 - Instead of rebuking them, he addressed their needs and explained that they actually had a very big role in the battle
- Gideon's Army
 - They had been traveling and were hungry so they asked for food from people of Israel and both Succoth and Penuel
 - Helping Gideon meant choosing sides and they were afraid to while the leaders of the Midianites still lived
 - Gideon dealt with them harshly as a symbol of the violence in which we need to remove carnal thoughts and thorns of sin
- Zebah and Zalmunna



- These leaders represent the devil and his followers
 - Zebah means sacrifice and Zalmunna means dark god so they represent sacrifices to idols
- Gideon questions them about their killing of his family and then kills them
-
- 28:29 And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you...you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. 31 Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue them...33 A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.
- It is odd that the people of Israel were willing to suffer in this way for 7 years before finally crying out to God
 - But often when we are enslaved by sin, we do not see the destruction that it is causing us
- God disciplines them and reminds them that He has the power to free them as He did in Egypt in order to wake them up from their ways. He wants them to know that they are
 - God is trying to make a point to the people that the explanation for the suffering of Israel is because God is letting the Midianites win. If He lets them win, He must have a good purpose for doing so

Gideon

- Angel of the Lord speaks to Gideon
 - Prefigure of Christ and the tree Gideon is under is a symbol of the cross
- It's clear that the appearance was in the form of a human because Gideon was not afraid when he first saw Him
- Gideon wonders if God has forgotten Israel, when in fact, it is Israel who has



forgotten God

The Sacrifice of Gideon

- Prepared meat, bread and broth and poured it on a rock and it was consumed by fire
 - The rock represents Christ while the goat represents sins of deed and the broth represents sins of desire according to St. Ambrose
- Why was Gideon's request for a sign accepted while Christ rejected the Pharisees call for a sign?
 - Gideon wanted to honor the Angel of the Lord as is evident by the offering
 - Gideon responded in faith, while the Pharisees accused Christ's miracles of being performed by the devil

Gideon destroys the altar of Baal

- Baal was an idol shaped like a bull, so bulls were going to tear down the altar. Ashera was a goddess carved from trees so carving would be used to burn the offering.
- The 10 men represent the Law with its ten commandments to destroy the inner altar of evil