

Sermon Title: **“ZEBAH & ZALMUNNA”**

Judges 8:1-27

- Judges 8 opens up with Ephraim angrily confronting Gideon
 - The real underlying issue was probably Ephraim was envious of the glory Gideon (of Manasseh) received
 - So Ephraim “contended with Gideon vigorously” = to quarrel (in this case with words) violently (with force)
 - Basically, Ephraim was venting & doing it out of envy, anger, & pride
 - Gideon displays self-control & answers Ephraim softly
 - Gideon’s answer stops Ephraim in their tracks
- Once Gideon & his 300 men cross the Jordan, Gideon asks Succoth for food
 - These leaders feared what would happen if they gave bread to the enemy
 - & that fear drove them to being cruel & uncompassionate
- Gideon & his 300 men go on to another place called Penuel & the men at Penuel answered just like the men at Succoth
 - Gideon promises to come back & destroy what they hide behind (going to remove their “strength”)
- Gideon still tired tracks down BOTH Zebah & Zalmunna & captures them
- On Gideon’s return home, he makes his way back to Succoth
 - Gideon was going to administer justice, just on those leaders who were cruel & uncompassionate toward he & his 300 men
 - Gideon found these 77 leaders & Gideon made a public spectacle of them (he used thorns & briars to whip these leaders)
- & just like Gideon promised to Penuel, he does (Gideon destroyed the stronghold that those in Penuel found their strength)
- Upon experiencing wonderful victory, Israel wants to make Gideon king
 - God was the One Who did something marvelous on Israel’s behalf (God should be honored & worshipped)
- This is unfortunately where Gideon takes a wrong turn (“Yet Gideon”)
 - Gideon wanted to remember this victory & asks each man to give him 1 earring of the Midianites who were just defeated
 - Then, Gideon had an Ephod made & hung it where he lived in Ophrah
 - An ephod = it was what the high priest’s wore on their chests
 - & Israel (along with Gideon & his household) looked to this symbol of victory as an idol