

# The Failure of Gideons House

Judges 8:1-10:5

**1. 8:1-17. Observe Gideon's response to the Ephraimites (vv.1-3) and the men of Succoth and Peniel (vv.4-17).**

**a) How were the responses of all three groups to Gideon similar?**

**b) What do you think Gideon was feeling on the inside when they dealt with these groups?**

**2. 8:1-17 a) How is Gideon forgetting the "lesson of the 300" (7:2)?**

**b) What kinds of emotions result when you forget God's grace?**

**3. a) 8:1-17. Why do you think Gideon's response to Succoth and Peniel was different than to Ephraim? (refer to 7:24-25)**

**b) 8:18-21. What do we learn here is the reason that drove Gideon with only 300 men to pursue relentlessly (8:4) and attack a superior (8:10) force?**

**c) One commentator says that Gideon proves we must "beware of the gifts of the Spirit without the fruit of the Spirit!" What do you think that means? What does it mean for us?**

## **Background Note:**

The ephod of the high priest (Exodus 28) was a breastplate that covered the wearer's front and back. It was covered with ornamental gold patterns and studded with gems. On the front of the breastplate were the Urim and Thummim — two stones that were used to receive 'yes' or 'no' answers from God. (Many believe that they were two-sided stones, much like coins. When they were 'flipped', two 'up-sides' meant yes, two 'down-sides' meant no, and a mixed result meant 'no answer'.) Gideon's ephod (8:24-27) was some sort of reproduction, and it was an effort to ascertain God's answers to their questions. People came to worship it as an idol.

**4. 8:22-35.**

**a) Why did Gideon decline the offer of kingship?**

**b) How could Gideon resist the invitation to rule in the place of God (v.22) yet worship an ephod in the place of God (v.27)?**

**5. a) What good thing becomes an "ephod" and a "snare" in your life?**

**b) How is prosperity a greater spiritual test than adversity?**

**6. 9:1-57.**

**a) How is the story of Abimelech distinctly different than that of every other leader we have profiled?**

**b) Why would the narrator devote so much space to this?**

**c) How did Gideon's actions sow the seeds for the disaster of Abimelech (8:29-31)**

**d) How does the parable of the bramble bush (vv.7-21) shed light on the meaning of the narrative?**

**7. 10:1-5. What is so striking about the simple record of the two judges, Tola and Jair?**