

# Judges 7-8

## Discussion Guide: Judges 7–8

*Theme: Victory and Vulnerability — The Danger After Deliverance*

### Big Idea

God brings victory in a way that makes His power unmistakable—but even after great victories, the human heart is still prone to pride, compromise, and drift.

### Opening Icebreaker

- Which is harder to handle well: failure or success? Why?

## Discussion Questions + Leader Notes

### 1. In 7:1–3, why does God reduce Gideon's army from 32,000 to 10,000?

#### Leader Notes:

- To remove fear-based participation
- Those who are afraid leave
- God is already thinning out self-reliance

### 2. Why does God reduce the army again to just 300 (7:4–8)?

#### Leader Notes:

- "Lest Israel boast..."
- This is about eliminating any ground for human pride
- God intentionally weakens them

### 3. What does this teach us about how God often works in our lives?

#### Leader Notes:

- God strips away self-sufficiency
- He leads us into situations where only He can deliver
- Weakness becomes the platform for His power

#### **4. How does God encourage Gideon before the battle (7:9–15)? Why is this significant?**

**Leader Notes:**

- God gives him reassurance through the enemy's dream
- God meets Gideon in his fear again
- Notice: God is patient even late in the process

#### **5. What stands out about the way Israel wins the battle (7:16–22)?**

**Leader Notes:**

- No conventional weapons
- Trumpets, jars, torches
- God causes confusion among the enemy
- Victory is clearly supernatural

#### **6. How does Gideon respond after the victory in 7:23–25 and into chapter 8?**

**Leader Notes:**

- He continues pursuing the enemy
- Leadership becomes more assertive
- Tone begins to shift toward intensity

#### **7. How does Gideon handle conflict with the Ephraimites (8:1–3)? What can we learn from this?**

**Leader Notes:**

- He responds with humility and diplomacy
- Diffuses tension wisely
- This is a strong leadership moment

#### **8. In contrast, how does Gideon treat Succoth and Penuel (8:4–17)? What's different?**

**Leader Notes:**

- Harsh, punitive response
- Revenge-driven tone
- This feels like a shift in his heart

#### **9. What do Gideon's actions in 8:18–21 reveal about his motivations?**

**Leader Notes:**

- Personal vengeance (“as the man is, so is his strength”)
- Less about God’s justice, more about personal retribution
- Subtle drift from God-centered to self-centered

## **10. Gideon refuses kingship in 8:22–23—why does this seem good at first?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- “The Lord will rule over you” → theologically correct
- Sounds like humility and faithfulness

## **11. What does Gideon do next in 8:24–27—and why is this so dangerous?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- Makes an ephod (idol-like object)
- “All Israel whored after it”
- Even good leaders can lead people into idolatry
- This is a tragic turn

## **12. What does this whole section teach us about the danger of success and spiritual drift?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- Victory does not equal maturity
- The heart can drift after spiritual highs
- Leaders are especially vulnerable
- Finishing well is harder than starting well

## **Closing Application**

- Where might success or blessing in your life be subtly leading you toward pride or self-reliance?
- Are you more vigilant after failure... or after success?
- What helps you stay grounded and dependent on God over time?

## **Gospel Connection (Leader Emphasis)**

- Gideon starts weak and dependent—but ends compromised
- Even the best judges fail

Point to Jesus:

- Jesus never drifted
- Jesus never used power for Himself
- Jesus didn't just start well—He finished perfectly

A strong line:

"Gideon shows us that even after victory, the human heart can drift. Jesus shows us what it looks like to remain perfectly faithful from beginning to end."

## **Leader Tip**

This week is about helping people see:

- It's not just about how you start
- It's not just about breakthrough moments
- It's about enduring faith and humility over time

Hold up both warnings:

- Fear before obedience (ch. 6)
- Pride after victory (ch. 7–8)