

# JUDGES

## **“Gideon and the 300”**

Series Objective:

Students will learn:

- How God used Judges to rescue God’s people
- That God’s people would turn away from God and come under oppression
- That God uses unlikely people to fulfill God’s plan
- God’s plan might not make sense, but it is always the right way

Series Theme Verse: “Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them.” –Judges 2:16 (ESV)

Lesson Objective: For students to understand that God’s plan might not make sense, but it is always the right way.

Lesson Passage: Judges 7:1-22

Materials Needed: Bibles, paper, pens, pencils, markers, Series Theme Verse on poster, a balloon

Lesson Plan:

Talking Points:

- Who was the judge that rescued the Israelites last week? (Gideon)
- What did we learn about Gideon? (He needed reminding that God was with him. He destroyed the altar of Baal and the pole of Asherah.)
- Who did Israel need rescuing from this week? (Midian)
- Gideon gathered an army of Israelites to fight the Midianites, but what did God tell him about his army? (You have too many men vs2)
- If I was going to battle, then I would want as many men as possible to fight with me, wouldn’t you? But the Lord said he didn’t want the Israelites to be able to brag and say look what we did because we had so many strong men. The Lord wanted them to rely on the Lord’s strength to help them beat the Midianites.
- Since God said there were too many men, 22,000 of the men left and went home. How many were left? (10,000 vs3)
- Lots and lots of men went home. What did God say next? (Still too many men vs4)
- God told Gideon to take the men down to the water. Gideon had to sort the men into two groups. How did he sort them? (Those who bent down to drink straight out of the water, and those who used their hands and lapped it up like a dog.)
- How many men lapped it like a dog? (300 vs6)
- These are the men that Gideon would take with him into battle. The rest of the men went home.

- How does God let Gideon know that God is still with him? (Tells Gideon to take his servant and go down to the Midian camp and listen to what they are saying. Gideon overhears a dream that means God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into Gideon's hands. vs9-14)
- How does Gideon respond when he overhears the dream and its interpretation? (He worships God and tells the 300 vs15)
- Next Gideon divided the 300 men into how many groups? (3 vs16)
- What did the men take with them? (trumpets and jars with torches inside vs16)
- Next the three groups surrounded the camp of the Midianites, and what did they do? (played the trumpet and smashed the jars vs20)
- What did they shout? (For the Lord and for Gideon vs18 or A sword for the Lord and for Gideon vs20)
- How did the Midianites react? (They were scared, they ran away, they turned on each other vs21-22)
- With only 300 men who carried trumpets and torches, Gideon defeated the Midianites and the people were saved! God helped Gideon and rescued the Israelites from their enemies.
- It might not make sense to us, to send only 300 men to fight an enemy who were too many to count (Ch 6:5), but God's plan worked. Gideon was obedient to God so it was the right plan.
- Can you think of any other stories in the Bible where God's plan seemed strange but still worked?
- This is our last lesson in Judges. Think back over Ehud, Deborah and Gideon. What did we learn about the Israelites or ourselves? What did we learn about God?

#### The Story Retold:

- Discuss with the group what kinds of movies/stories they like and what they think makes a great movie or story.
- Explain that Gideon's story could be a great movie. There's a hero. Good guys and bad guys. The odds seem to be against the Israelites. The enemy is impossible to count, they've enslaved them for years, Gideon's army doesn't have any weapons – just trumpets and jars, etc. What if this summer Gideon's 300 came to a theater near you?
- Have the students break up into small groups to create a quick one to two minute movie trailer for the film.
- They can plan it out in words or pictures. Have them think about what parts of the story they would want to highlight to grab an audience's attention to come see the movie. What would the voice over guy say? Would there be a tagline to the title of the movie?
- Let the groups share their ideas with each other.
- Here's a link to a YouTube video to show after everyone's had a chance to share: <https://youtu.be/J6ytVPNXy4A>

#### The Story and Me:

- Review the memory verse.

- Ask who can say it without looking. Let the students share.
- Have the students stand in a circle to play a game.
- The object of the game is to keep the balloon from touching the ground.
- Toss the balloon into the air. The first person to touch it must say the first word of the verse. The second person to touch the balloon must say the second word of the verse. etc. If the balloon touches the ground, then you must start over from the beginning.
- Hopefully you will keep the balloon up in the air long enough to say the entire verse. If you are still going, then just repeat the verse.