**Gideon’s 300**

*Judges 7*

**Introduction**

1. We’ve heard of king Leonidas of Sparta, and his 300 Spartan soldiers who stood against Xerxes and Persia, fighting to the death at Thermopylae.
   1. Such a valiant, and sacrificial effort is remembered, and etched in history.
   2. However, there is a battle of 300 soldiers that is far more impressive.
2. During the time of Judges, God used a man named Gideon and 300 soldiers to defeat a people ***“as numerous as locusts” (Judges 7:12).*** They did not merely stand opposed only to be defeated, but gained victory in the Lord.
   1. Cycle of Judges – rebellion, oppressed by enemies, cry for help/turn to the Lord, Judge raised by God for deliverance – cycle repeated.
   2. **Judges 21:25** – the theme of the book for the most part.
   3. The Midianites oppressed Israel during the time of Gideon – **Judges 6:1-6** – so God chose Gideon as deliverer, and delivered in an incredible fashion.
3. Gideon’s 300 Defeat the Midianites
4. Gideon is Chosen by God
   1. **Judges 6:14-16** – From the start, we notice God’s choice sets up for His glory.
      1. **(6:17-24)** – Gideon makes an offering, and it is consumed with fire. He knows he has found favor in God’s eyes.
      2. **(6:25-27)** – Upon God’s instruction Gideon tore down the altar of Baal by night.
      3. **(6:28-33)** – The next day the men of the city saw the altar torn down, found that Gideon did it, and the Midianites and Amalekites gathered together.
      4. **(6:34-45)** – The Spirit of the Lord was with Gideon, and he blew a trumpet and many gathered behind him from several places.
   2. **Judges 6:36-40** – Gideon asked God to assure him he was chosen to deliver Israel from the Midianites.
5. God Reduces the Men
   1. **Judges 7:1-2** – Gideon and the people readied themselves and made camp near the Midianites.
      1. Enough people had come to Gideon’s aid that God decided to reduce the number.
      2. **(v. 2)** – He didn’t want anyone to think they did it themselves.
   2. **(v. 3)** – If fearful, leave – reduced from 32,000 to 10,000.
   3. **(v. 4)** – Still too many, God would tell Him who will not go.
   4. **(vv. 5-6)** – Go to water – lap like dog, or get down on knees to drink – Lap like a dog would fight with Gideon – from 10,000 to 300.
   5. **(vv. 7-8)** – God will save Israel with these 300.
6. God Reassures Gideon
   1. **(7:9-12)** – God told Gideon that He’d given Midian, but if he needed further assurance to go down to their camp and hear what they say.
   2. **Judges 7:13-15** – Gideon heard a man telling a dream, and another telling its interpretation, and worshiped God for delivering Midian into his hand.
7. Gideon Takes Action, and God Gives Victory
   1. After God’s reassurance to Gideon, he took action, gathered the troops, gave commands, and went to defeat the Midianites.
   2. **Judges 7:16-25** – With 300 men, God used Gideon to defeat the Midianites.
      1. Surrounded the camp with the 300 with concealed torches, and at once exposed the torches, blew trumpets, and shouted.
      2. **(vv. 21-22)** – the result was chaos in the Midianite camp where they began to mistake themselves as the enemy, and fought each other.
      3. **(vv. 23-25)** – the men pursued the others, and the Lord gave victory.
   3. A victory of such fashion was sure to give God the glory. There is no other explanation than God being on their side and determining to grant them victory.
8. There are several applications that can be made from this impressive account.
9. Applications
10. God’s Strength is Made Perfect in Weakness
    1. The choosing of Gideon – **Judges 6:14-16**
    2. The reduction of the people – **Judges 7:2** – from 32,000 to 10,000 to 300.
    3. The unfortunate situations we find ourselves in from time to time only supply God a platform to manifest His strength in our lives to a more complete degree.
       1. Trials and tribulations should not cause us to lose faith.
       2. Instead, they should cause us to turn to God in faith for strength, thus, bringing Him glory when He brings us through.
    4. Paul – **2 Corinthians 12:7-10** – God’s grace was sufficient for him to endure.
       1. **(v. 9a**) – grace – ultimately the favor in Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection of forgiveness and hope of resurrection.
       2. The hope of heaven due to the forgiveness in Christ is sufficient for Paul to endure. THIS IS REALIZED TO THE GREATER DEGREE WHEN IN DIRE STRAIGHTS.
       3. **(vv. 9b-10)** – The weaknesses in Paul’s flesh could be endured through the power of Christ, thus Christ would be glorified.
       4. **2 Corinthians 4:7-15** – God chose them as weaker vessels to preach the gospel, and suffer doing so, that the power of Christ’s resurrection would be apparent in their lives.
    5. We must endure! We must delight in our unfortunate situations to the extent that Christ’s power can be manifested through us. CHRIST’S GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR EVERYTHING.
11. Glory Always Belongs to God
    1. The reduction of the people by God was to ensure glory would be directed to Him – **Judges 7:2**
    2. We should never seek, or welcome attention on ourselves. As we live to do God’s will we should always bring the focus back to Him.
    3. Prideful Corinthians – **1 Corinthians 4:6-7** – received, not achieved.
       1. Any ability the different people in Corinth had came from God.
       2. Especially a division in spiritual gifts – **1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11** – giving as He wills.
    4. Paul’s perspective – **1 Corinthians 15:9-10** – I am what I am by the grace of God.
    5. We are to always remember who is behind the things we do in the gospel. **Philippians 2:12-13** – We work out our own, but God works in us – glory belongs to Him. (WE WOULDN’T BE ANYWHERE WITHOUT HIM.) (THIS PROMOTES HUMILITY.)
12. Worship is the Proper Reaction to God’s Grace
    1. After God reassured Gideon that He would be with him, and grant him victory, Gideon wasted no time falling down to worship Him – **Judges 7:15**
    2. Worship should not merely be a response to a command to do so – **cf. Hebrews 10:24-25** – it is certainly commanded.
    3. Worshiping God should be a natural response of a thankful heart to the grace of God – **John 9:35-38** – man blind from birth healed at pool of Siloam, upon learning of Jesus, fell down and worshiped Him.
    4. **Psalm 117; 118:1-4** – Praise and thanksgiving to God for His enduring mercy to all.
13. Every Man Must Stand in His Place for Success
    1. Gideon’s instructions to the men were very specific and had to be carried out accurately to be effective. The men responsibly followed, and stood where they needed to stand – **Judges 7:21**
       1. The 3 companies of 100 surrounded the camp by night.
       2. This gave the illusion that there were far more.
       3. If there had been a void because one had not “stood in his place,” the plan would not have worked as well.
    2. The church will grow, and be edified according to God’s plan. His plan is that ALL the members participate in edification – **Ephesians 4:16** – EVERY JOINT SUPPLIES.
    3. **Romans 12:3-8** – We stand in our place by using what God has entrusted us with for the edification of the church.
       1. Are you using your gifts.
       2. Remember what Jesus said of Mary – **“SHE HAS DONE WHAT SHE COULD.” (Mark 14:8)** (Anointed Jesus with her costly oil.)
       3. ARE WE DOING WHAT WE CAN?
14. Victory is Certain with God
    1. The interpretation of the dream was as though the victory was complete – **Judges 7:14** – “GOD HAS DELIVERED”
       1. Past tense – as if it was as good as done.
    2. **1 Corinthians 15:50-58** – Victory in the Lord is certain. Therefore, we must stand fast in Him understanding what awaits us.
    3. It matters not how rough it gets in this life. If we are faithful, we are promised glory – **Romans 8:18** – not worthy to be compared.

**Conclusion**

1. Let us remember the dramatic victory of God over the Midianites, and how such was accomplished – through Gideon and 300 men.
2. There is nothing too hard for God, and we should trust in Him always, standing fast in His word, and relying on Him in full confidence for the victory in the end. We will obtain it.