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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2258 ~ Gideon's Victory.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

In the 300 years after God's people, the Israelites, were first settled in the Promised Land of Canaan, the people were ruled by a series of judges, as listed in the book of Judges in the Bible. Some of these judges we're told very little about; however, others have become household names by their obedience to God and His leadership in times of despair. God called a man named Gideon to fight a huge army of Midianites and their allies who together, had made it a practice to strip the Israelites of their crops and animals each year at harvest time. God allowed this to bring the Israelites back from worshipping the pagan Canaanite idols around them and to serve Him only.

To prevent the Israelites from claiming any credit for a victory in battle over the Midianites, God greatly reduced the number of Israelite soldiers to take part. First, He told Gideon to send home all the fearful soldiers, and 22,000 men went home! But God knew that the 10,000 men left were still too many. So God separated the soldiers in how they drank water from a stream. In the end, only 300 men were left while the others were sent back to their tents. Gideon now had less than 1% of his original army and his faith was being tested again. To encourage Gideon, God sent him and his servant to spy on the enemy's camp in the valley below them.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

How kind God was to send Gideon and his servant down to the enemy's camp to hear a conversation between two enemy soldiers about a dream one had had. This is recorded in Judges, Chapter 7, and on hearing this, Gideon received great reassurance that with God's help, the Midianites would surely be defeated. Gideon then made a plan of action.

Although the Lord Himself would bring the victory, He wanted to do it using Gideon and his 300 men. Each had the provisions and trumpets of those who'd been sent back to their tents.

Gideon's plan required the men to conceal their flaming torches in empty clay jars and keep them hidden until his trumpet blew. Then they were to blow their trumpets! The element of surprise was critical for the success of this battle. Since trumpets were used only by military commanders for signalling, 300 trumpets represented a large army. In the middle of the night, Gideon blew his trumpet, his men blew theirs, they broke their jars, raised their torches and they shouted the battle cry.

As God often did, He threw the enemy soldiers into confusion. Thinking that Gideon's men were inside the camp, the enemy soldiers began fighting each other in the dark. As the enemy fled, the remaining Israelite soldiers waiting back at their tents pursued them. Gideon asked that the men of the tribe of Ephraim block the crossings at the Jordan River to prevent the enemy army from escaping. Isn't God amazing? In the first stage of the battle, Gideon and his 300 men had done no fighting – just a lot of trumpet blowing and shouting.

Gideon came from the Israelite tribe of Manasseh. This tribe and the tribe of Ephraim were the two major Israelite tribes living in northern Canaan. Because the men of Ephraim weren't called to the battle until later, they were upset with Gideon. Maybe they thought they'd lost a lot of plunder which could have enriched their tribe? Or they felt left out? We don't know for sure but Gideon gave them a soft answer to turn away their anger. He compared the little he'd done against all the men of Ephraim had done. They later received more spoils of war than Gideon's own clan.

After the major defeat of the Midianite forces, Gideon continued to pursue two of their kings across the Jordan River into the tribal territory of Gad. By now, Gideon's 300 men were exhausted, so Gideon asked for food for them from two different towns they travelled through. But the elders of both towns refused. The elders doubted that Gideon could capture the two kings and feared that later, these enemy kings would punish them for helping Gideon. Gideon in turn, threatened the townships with punishment for not helping their fellow Israelites.

Gideon pursued and found two enemy kings and about 15,000 of their remaining troops left alive. The kings thought that they were secure where they were staying, but Gideon attacked them. The two kings fled but Gideon chased after them and captured them. He brought them back the way they'd travelled and to the two towns that had refused Gideon any food for his troops. And there, Gideon punished the elders of those two towns.

There was an underlying reason for Gideon to catch those two particular kings. They had ordered the death of Gideon's brothers. Gideon said that if they'd let his brothers live, then he would have let them live. Gideon then commanded his young son to kill the two kings in order to further humiliate them. To be killed by a boy or a woman was considered a disgrace in those ancient times. But when Gideon's son was afraid and unable to do so, Gideon executed the two kings himself.

After this great victory over the Midianites, the Israelites asked Gideon to become their ruler. But Gideon gave the people a very definite 'No' for an answer. He said that it was the Lord who would rule over them. During Gideon's lifetime, Israel remained at peace and the Israelites didn't worship the pagan Canaanite gods. Although Gideon refused to be Israel's king, he certainly lived like one. He had 70 sons and many wives; also a secondary wife who gave him a son named Abimelech, even though she lived with her family elsewhere.

As was the case with all the previous judges, things only went well in Israel as long as that judge lived. When the judge died, the Israelite people again started to worship Canaanite gods. They would quickly forget both the Lord who had saved them and the leader who had led them. Only because of God's amazing grace and His everlasting covenant with His people that God did not end the history of Israel right here in the book of Judges.

What can we learn about godly leadership from Gideon and the other judges who are listed in the book of Judges? A good leader is modest, humble and not arrogant.

In Proverbs, Chapter 16, it says: "The Lord hates everyone who is arrogant; He will never let them escape punishment." A good leader seeks the Lord's will, commits his way to the Lord and the Lord establishes the steps of that leader's life.

A good leader is a peacemaker, for the Scriptures say that when a person's ways please the Lord, the Lord will make even his enemies to be at peace with him. However, some leaders aren't interested in examining opposing viewpoints or other people's ideas. Although we need to listen to others carefully, we're to refuse to compromise on the Biblical principles God has given us. We're not to become a doormat and let everyone walk all over us.

A good leader is also fair and just. In Proverbs, Chapter 16, it says: "It is better to have a little, honestly earned, than to have a large income, dishonestly gained." While it's good to have goals and work hard to achieve them, the old saying – 'the end justifies the means' – is simply not true in God's eyes. A good leader should be more interested in doing things God's way the first time. Part of this involves not having personal favourites among co-workers. We've all seen how a relative of someone important in the church can be given a position for which they had no previous experience or ability or calling.

You may also know of leaders who surround themselves with 'yes' people, or leader pleasers. Personal insecurity drives the leaders to seek only positive reinforcement from others for every decision they make. The Bible says that a good leader relies on the wise advice of honest and trustworthy people who are willing to speak their minds and offer sound counsel. This leads to a good leader's character of being quick to learn and gain godly understanding. The day that you feel that there is nothing left to learn, is the day that pride and arrogance have taken root. Remember the old saying: 'Pride goes before a fall'.

A good leader is slow to get angry with others, just like God Himself. The Bible says that “Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.” God tells us how to be effective, godly leaders. But with the guidance of the God’s Holy Spirit, it’s up to us to confess our human tendencies to God and embrace the principles God has taught us. We are exhorted to pray for those whom we serve, so that they too, will become the good leaders God wants them to be.

Remember this: if you have authority over anyone at all, they’re watching you and they’re observing the standard that you’re setting in your everyday life. This makes you a leader and an example for someone else to follow. A good leader motivates those around about them but doesn’t mislead or exploit those who are under them. As a result, there are times of seasons of prayer for those leaders in our lives who have troubles and needs of their own.

Good leaders bring honour to God by their service to Him. It’s a sad fact of life that maturity doesn’t always come with age. As Christians we need to take responsibility for who we are and what God wants us to be. This means that we need to identify our weaknesses and surrender them to Jesus, not letting them undermine our character and ministry. We have to learn how to humbly take criticism and respond to it in a positive way rather than an offended one. Instead of reacting badly, we need to make criticism serve as an opportunity to teach others more of Scripture and in turn, ask for help from them when it’s needed. All these good leadership qualities remind us of the Lord Jesus Christ. He came to do His Father’s will and not His own. Such good leadership traits can be produced only from a life completely devoted and surrendered to Jesus and His ways. Have you ever given any thought about where you’d like to spend eternity after you die?

Do you believe that Jesus came to earth from heaven a sinless man of God and that He has always been the divine Son of God? Are you prepared to stake your life on what He did for those of us who believe in Him? If you said “Yes” to both these questions, ask Jesus to forgive you of all your sins and make your heart pure and holy before God His Father. Ask Jesus to place God’s Holy Spirit onto your heart so that you are sealed as becoming God’s own special adopted son or daughter for eternity.

Jesus Himself said in John, Chapter 6, Verse 47: “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.”

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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