

## How to Narcigete Any Bible Story

There is an epidemic of Narcissistic Eisegesis a.k.a. Narcigesis, infecting the churches in America today. Pastors and Bible teachers have mastered the art of allegorizing all of the characters and details of every Bible story in order to make the stories about YOU. Therefore, I've decided to give a little 'how to' advice regarding this Bible twisting technique in the hopes that by doing so you'll see the obvious problems with this way of approaching the Biblical texts. So here we go.

### How to Narcigete Any Bible Story In 4 Easy Steps

**Primary Assumption:** Every Bible story is about *YOU*. And, since *YOU* struggle with setbacks, problems and challenges that keep *YOU* from achieving *YOUR* maximal greatness that means that the Bible is really all about giving *YOU* a road map that *YOU* can follow to achieve *YOUR* dreams and god-given destiny.

#### Step 1

Read a Bible Story.

#### Step 2

Identify the hero and the villain(s) in the story.

#### Step 3

Identify yourself with the hero (who also happens to be on a journey toward greatness and achieving his god-given destiny, just like you).

Identify your current problems, challenges and setbacks with the villain(s) in the story.

#### Step 4

Identify the key action taken by the hero to defeat the villain. Allegorize that action by calling it a 'principle' and then challenge people to 'apply this principle' in their lives in order to defeat the problems, challenges and setbacks in their lives so that they can achieve greatness.

### Examples

We'll begin with the story of the parting of the Red Sea from [Exodus 14:5-31](#).

#### *Step 1 - Read the Story*

“When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have

you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

"The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.""

"Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses."

*Step 2 - Identify the hero and the villain(s) in the story.*

Hero: Moses

Villain: Pharaoh's Army

*Step 3 - Identify yourself with the hero and your current problems, challenges and setbacks with the villain(s) in the story.*

Hero: Moses = YOU

Villain: Pharaoh's Army = debt, negative people in your life, a boring job, marital challenges, etc.

*Step 4 - Identify the key action taken by the hero to defeat the villain. Allegorize that action by calling it a 'principle' and then challenge people to 'apply this principle' in their lives in order to defeat the problems, challenges and setbacks in their lives so that they can achieve greatness.*

Key action: Moses lifted his staff and parted the water.

Therefore, in order to defeat the forces of evil that are keeping you from achieving your god-given greatness and destiny, YOU need to apply the principle of "Staff Raising" and lift your staff and command the waters to part so that you can enter your promised land.

**Obvious Problem:** Telling people to lift their staff and part the waters in their lives doesn't make any sense. How does one go about doing such a thing? I don't even own a staff. Do I need to go out and buy one? Do I need to practice this principle at a local pond or lake?

Although this advice sounds Biblical because it uses Biblical imagery and words, there is no real way to apply the "principle". In the end the advice offered is empty and useless.

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Example 2 is from the story of Gideon's defeat of the Midianites found in [Judges 7:1-25](#)

*Step 1 - Read the story*

"Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod. And the camp of Midian was north of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

The LORD said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.' Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home and hurry away from Mount Gilead.'" Then 22,000 of the people returned, and 10,000 remained.

And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there, and anyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' shall go with you, and anyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' shall not go." So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "Every one who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set by himself. Likewise, every one who kneels down to drink." And the number of those who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths, was 300 men, but all the rest of the people knelt down to drink water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "With the 300 men who lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand, and let all the others go every man to his home." So the people took provisions in their hands, and their trumpets. And he sent all the rest of Israel every man to his tent, but retained the 300 men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

That same night the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand. But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant. And you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp." Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outposts of the armed men who were in the camp. And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the East lay along the valley like locusts in abundance, and their camels were without number, as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance. When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to his comrade. And he said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and behold, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat." And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given into his hand Midian and all the camp."

As soon as Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped. And he returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the LORD has given the host of Midian into your hand." And he divided the 300 men into three companies and put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars, with torches inside the jars. And he said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise. When I come to the

outskirts of the camp, do as I do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then blow the trumpets also on every side of all the camp and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'"

So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch. And they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands. Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars. They held in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow. And they cried out, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the army ran. They cried out and fled. When they blew the 300 trumpets, the LORD set every man's sword against his comrade and against all the army. And the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abelmeholah, by Tabbath. And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after Midian.

Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites and capture the waters against them, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were called out, and they captured the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan. And they captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. Then they pursued Midian, and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon across the Jordan."

*Step 2 - Identify the hero and the villain(s) in the story.*

Hero: Gideon  
Villain(s): Midianites

*Step 3 - Identify yourself with the hero and your current problems, challenges and setbacks with the villain(s) in the story.*

Hero: Gideon = YOU  
Villain(s): Midianites = debt, negative people in your life, a boring job, marital challenges, etc.

*Step 4 - Identify the key action taken by the hero to defeat the villain. Allegorize that action by calling it a 'principle' and then challenge people to 'apply this principle' in their lives in order to defeat the problems, challenges and setbacks in their lives so that they can achieve greatness.*

Key action: Gideon reduced the size of his army from 32,000 to 300 and then launched a surprise attack.

Therefore, in order to defeat the forces of evil that are keeping you from achieving your god-given greatness and destiny, you need to apply the principle of "Army Reduction" by reducing the size of your army and then launching a surprise attack against your Midianites.

**Obvious Problem:** How is it possible that both of these stories are about me and my day to day challenges? Furthermore, what kind of advice is it to tell me that in order to defeat the "Midianites" in my life that I need to reduce the size of my army and launch a surprise attack? What army are you talking about? I don't even have an army and I don't know anyone who is a Midianite! How on earth can this be the principle that God wants me to apply, it doesn't make any sense?

Although this advice sounds Biblical because it uses Biblical imagery and words, there is no real way to apply the "principle". In the end the advice offered is empty and useless.

**Not So Obvious Problem:** When you make these stories about YOU and a "principle" that you need to discover and apply have you noticed that God nearly disappears from the story?

## Further Examples

I won't reproduce anymore Bible stories here. But, quickly think about the details of several other stories in the Bible and how they'd be 'preached' using Narcigesis, i.e. Fall of Jericho, David and Goliath, Daniel in the Lions Den, and Jonah and the Big Fish. Do you *really* think that all of these stories are about you and the principles that you need to apply in order to achieve your god-given dream destiny? What if they're not about you at all? What if these stories are ultimately about Jesus? Isn't that who Jesus said the scriptures were about?

[Jesus said] "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life." ([John 5:39-41](#))

## The Ultimate Example of Narcigesis

The sermon that is posted below for your 'listening pleasure' is an example of Narcigeting the Biblical story about the birth of Jesus Christ. In this re-imagining of the Christmas story, Troy Gramling, makes the Christmas story ALL ABOUT YOU and by doing so, misses the entire point of the story. He doesn't just take Christ out of Christmas, he replaces Christ with **YOU**.

I hope that after reading this post and listening to that "Christmas" sermon, that you'll be inoculated against those false teachers who twist God's word using Narcigesis.

"But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people." ([2 Timothy 3:1-5](#))

"For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths" ([2 Timothy 4:3-4](#))

*Chris Rosebrough* of "Fighting for the Faith"