
“The Sword of Gideon”

Sunday School Lesson from Judges 6-7



To God be the Glory...

Sunday School Lesson on Gideon and the Midianites

Although not as well-known as some Biblical hero tales, the story of Gideon is an amazing example of God’s power and ability to use anyone for His purposes. In a way, it is also an example of how easily we are doubtful or uncertain. This lesson aims to encourage children to trust God and believe in His promises.

Lesson focus: God will always do what He promises, and will rescue us in times of trouble. He can use even the smallest of people to do amazing things for His glory.

Passage: Judges 6:11-7:25

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade (See notes for specific age modifications)

Materials Needed: Water pitcher, party horns, pictures of weapons or heroes, tissue paper or construction paper, toilet paper or paper towel tubes, stickers, markers, glue, Bible verses.

Bonus Ideas:

- Don’t miss the [Gideon Craft Ideas](#) from our website
- [Sunday School Lesson \(Judges 7\) God is Almighty](#)
- [Gideon Sunday School Lessons](#)
- [Children’s Church Bible Lesson on Gideon](#)



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Activity Introduction to Gideon Sunday

School Lesson

Lesson Opening: Begin the lesson with a couple of visual illustrations:

- Us versus them: invite several students to stand up (the whole group, depending on size). Ask them if they think they can work as a group to knock down the teacher, or another adult nearby. It might sound do-able with everyone...Then have about half the kids sit back down. Do they think they can still knock him/her over? Perhaps. Have several more students sit down. Would it be tougher now? Finally, have everyone except one student (preferably a younger or smaller one) sit. Do you think he/she can knock the big adult over? Give it a try! Upon coming near the adult, have the adult fall down without even being touched. Explain that in today's story, an unlikely and very small army defeated a much bigger enemy. But God made something amazing happen!
- Choose your weapons...what are some weapons that we might see or hear about? Display several pictures of modern or ancient weapons, like swords, guns, tanks, or bows and arrows. Do these seem like big and powerful weapons? Next, hold up for students a water pitcher, a flashlight, and a party horn or instrument. Do these seem like good weapons? Maybe not so much...but with God, anything is possible!

Explain to students that today's lesson will focus on trusting God and following Him, even when it seems things might be difficult or even impossible.



Sunday School Lesson on Gideon

Start out by discussing things that might be scary. What are students afraid of? Why are these things nerve-wracking? Describe how the story they will hear today has to do with some scary-sounding elements.

The Bible story covers a bit of length, so it might be best to paraphrase parts of it, or for younger students most of it. At this time of the Bible, the people of Israel were ruled by judges. Explain that a judge was sort of like a governor or special leader that could help people. Set the stage by explaining that the people of God often made mistakes and did not obey Him. When this happened, sometimes enemies came and took over their land.

When the people of Israel cried out to the Lord on account of the Midianites, ⁸ the Lord sent a prophet to the people of Israel. And he said to them, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of slavery. ⁹ And I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. ¹⁰ And I said to you, ‘I am the Lord your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.’ But you have not obeyed my voice.” –Judges 6:7-10

There was a man named Gideon, who was a farmer. An angel came to Gideon and announced that God was going to use him to save the people and destroy their enemies. Gideon was doubtful. He was not mighty or powerful or a strong warrior. How could God use him? The angel assured him that he was the man for the job. Point out to students how this happens a lot. God chooses unlikely heroes, like Moses, David, or the disciples, and does incredible things.



Describe for children how after the angel visited, Gideon was instructed to tear down the idols of the false god, Baal. He took them out of the temple and replaced them with God's altar. You'd think this might give Gideon a little boost of confidence, but he was still somewhat doubtful.

He even made a deal with God. Have you ever made a deal with someone? Well, Gideon asked God to give him a special sign, just to make sure he really was the one God wanted to use to defeat the Midianites:

Then Gideon said to God, "If you will save Israel by my hand, as you have said, ³⁷ behold, I am laying a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is dew on the fleece alone, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you have said." ³⁸ And it was so. When he rose early next morning and squeezed the fleece, he wrung enough dew from the fleece to fill a bowl with water. –Judges 6:36-38

If you have a piece of fleece material or clothing handy, let children touch it to remind them of what fleece is. Gideon was asking God to do something special so he could be sure that His instructions were accurate. It would be sort of like asking God to make it rain if He wanted you to win a soccer game. Sounds a little strange, doesn't it? But God did it! Yet Gideon still was not satisfied. He asked God to prove Himself *again!*

Then Gideon said to God, "Let not your anger burn against me; let me speak just once more. Please let me test just once more with the fleece. Please let it be dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground let there be dew." ⁴⁰ And God did so that night; and it was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was dew. –Judges 6:39-40



So now Gideon pretty much knows he has to go through with this, or at least we'd hope so. Before he went into battle, though, God did another interesting thing. He shrank the army. You would think that defeating a big enemy would require making the army bigger, right? Not this time. See if students can figure out why God did what He did...

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.

² 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.' ³ 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.

⁴ 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." ⁵ 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." ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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." ⁸ 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. Judges 7:1-8

So why did God get rid of so many potential fighting soldiers? First He cut the army in half, and then cut it down even further! The Midianites now outnumbered them almost 50 to 1! If students have not caught on, explain that God wanted to make



sure HE received the glory for the victory. The Israelites had to know there was no possible way they could have done it on their own.

And Gideon? Well, he was still pretty nervous. He sneaked down into the Midianite camp and listened in on their conversation. In it, he overheard someone discussing a dream he had experienced, in which a big barley cake came and knocked over their tent. Gideon took this to mean that they would win the battle, and it gave him hope and inspiration.

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." ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ And he said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise. When I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. ¹⁸ 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.'" –Judges 7:15-18

Pause the story for a few rounds of rock, paper, scissors. Talk again about weapons. What kind of weapons seem best for a battle? Probably not trumpets and pitchers with fire inside. That seems a bit odd and unusual. Do you think God can still use those things to win? Of course!

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. ²⁰ 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!”²¹ Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the army ran. They cried out and fled.²² 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,^[a] as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.²³ And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after Midian. –Judges 7:19-23

Wow! Did you catch that? Make sure students are aware just how surprising and miraculous this battle was. The Israelites didn't even have to fight. All they had to do was blow their trumpets and smash their pitchers to reveal the torches inside. As soon as they startled the army of Midian, the enemies ran away, and then started fighting amongst themselves! God did it! He won with Gideon's help, just as He had promised.

Reflect again on how God fulfills His promises and does amazing things through His people. Gideon might have been afraid and doubtful, but he knew He could trust God. And so can we! We might not think we are special or strong, but we don't have to be. We just need to be willing to let God work through us. And we know He will give us what He promises, because He sent the savior Jesus, just like He said He would! What a terrific thing to remember.

Close with prayer and thank God for His power in our lives. Ask for help in trusting Him to do great things and for help not to fear.



Gideon Sunday School Crafts

Craft: “Torch in a cup” craft

Help students make a fun reminder of the unlikely weapon used in the story.

- Allow students to decorate toilet paper tubes and Styrofoam or paper cups, using stickers or markers.
- Inside the tube, glue tissue paper or construction paper in “flame” colors like red, orange, or yellow.
- Place the tube inside the cup, with a party horn for added trumpet flair, if desired.
- Attach a Bible verse from the story.

“Trumpet” for Gideon’s army

- Cut an arch across the top of a piece of construction paper or cardstock, in order for the paper to be roll-able.
- Invite students to decorate the paper.
- Roll into a trumpet/megaphone shape.
- Add a pipe cleaner or cardboard handle on the bottom.
- Make some noise!



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