

LESSON 46

God Calls Gideon

JUDGES 6



————— BIBLE TRUTH —————

GOD CALLS GIDEON IN ORDER TO DISPLAY HIS POWER AND SAVE HIS PEOPLE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
Read Judges 6:11–32 from the Scriptures or read story 46, “God Calls Gideon,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** **10 MIN**
Out of Sight, Out of Mind
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ bag of candy-coated chocolates
 - ✓ bag of nonchocolate candies
 - ✓ large plastic bowl
 - ✓ a trash can with dirt in it (simply sweep the floor and place the refuse in the classroom trash can before class)
 - ✓ a more healthy snack to give to the children
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** **10 MIN**
It Is Not the Man but God Who Delivers
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ large sledgehammer
 - ✓ normal size hammer
6. **WORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** **10 MIN**
Coloring Activity
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ coloring page 46—one copy for each child
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **10 MIN**
Who Does the Choosing?
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ lyrics to the hymn “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Israel does evil in the eyes of the Lord—Israel had fought many battles in the Promised Land, and the tribes of Israel have settled in various regions. Joshua has died, and the Lord has raised up judges to rule the people. But God’s command to completely destroy all the Canaanites in the Promised Land has not been carried out. Because of this, the Israelites continue to suffer in many ways.

The Midianites, who still live in the land because they were not destroyed, are taking Israel’s crops and animals. When the Israelites cry out to God for help, God sends them a prophet to explain that they are suffering because they have not obeyed God.

God chooses Gideon—Gideon doesn’t ask God to come, nor does he call out to God. He in no way expects a visit from God. He is only afraid that the Midianites will steal his wheat. Nevertheless, God has plans for Gideon. So God appears to Gideon in the form of an “angel of the Lord.”

To save Israel from the Midianites, God chooses Gideon, the weakest man from the weakest clan in the tribe of Manasseh. No one would have expected Gideon to be chosen as a deliverer. Once again God plans to work his salvation in such a way as to bring glory to himself, not to any man.

Gideon is weak—God tells Gideon to tear down the altar of Baal and the Asherah pole beside it. He tells him to build an altar to the Lord in its place, and to make a sacrifice on that new altar. Gideon wants to obey God, but he is afraid, so he does these things at night under cover of darkness.

God uses Gideon in spite of his weakness and helps him grow in courage over time. Eventually Gideon trusts the Lord for he sees that God is faithful and will protect him and give him victory. When the enemies of Israel prepare to attack, the Spirit of the Lord comes upon Gideon and he begins to gather an army. The once fearful Gideon, the least of his family in the weakest clan, is filled with courage and trusts the Lord to go with him into battle.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Judges 6:11–24.

God was patient with Gideon and built his faith with many miraculous signs. The most important sign God gave Gideon was when the angel of the Lord visited him. In Judges 6:16 (NIV), the Lord answered Gideon's concerns about being the weakest of his family, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together."

Like Gideon, our salvation completely depends on God. We, like Gideon, face an impossible enemy, sin. Only the blood of Jesus our Redeemer can bring victory for our own lives and help us win others for Christ. In a similar statement, Jesus said to his disciples in giving them the Great Commission, "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). The Lord was with Gideon to win the battle, and he is with us as well.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Judges 6:11–32 from the Scriptures or read story 46, "God Calls Gideon," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Out of Sight, Out of Mind

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ bag of candy-coated chocolates
- ✓ bag of nonchocolate candies
- ✓ large plastic bowl

- ✓ a trash can with dirt in it (simply sweep the floor and place the refuse in the classroom trash can before class)
- ✓ a more healthy snack to give to the children

Make sure you are aware of food allergies of those in your class.

The object of this lesson is to help the children see why God told the Israelites to destroy the Canaanites and all their idols.

Tell the children that they cannot eat any chocolate in your class. Ask them if any of them have any chocolate with them. Then go around the room and place three or four chocolates in front of each child. Ask if they are tempted to disobey when the chocolate is right in front of them. Then increase the temptation by making comments to entice them to eat the chocolate. Ask again if any of them want to eat the chocolate. Go on to read the story for today. When you are finished, ask them how many of them are even more tempted than before.

Finally, take the trash can around and have each of them throw away the candy. Then in front of them place your foot inside the trash can to pack it down. (You might even blow your nose in a tissue and throw that on top of the candy in the trash can.)

Then ask the class the following questions:

- **How was the temptation to eat the chocolate candy lessened when it was thrown in the trash?**
(They should say it was greatly lessened. Then pass out the nonchocolate candy and give permission to eat it.)
- **How is this illustration like God's call for Israel to completely destroy the Canaanites and their gods? Read Deuteronomy 7:1–5 to the class.**
(The children should compare the temptation to disobey your instructions about the chocolate with Israel's temptation to follow other gods. God wanted Israel to destroy the peoples and gods of Canaan so they would not be right in front of them to tempt them.)
- **Reread Judges 6:1, 25. What do we learn in these verses about what Israel did and what Gideon's father did?**
(We learn that the people of Israel did what was evil. We see an example of it in the life of Gideon's father who had an altar to Baal, a Canaanite god.)

Finally, pass out the healthy snack and say you have something much better for them than the candy. Talk about how God was so much better for Israel than the idols of the Canaanites.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

It Is Not the Man but God Who Delivers

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ large sledgehammer
- ✓ normal size hammer

Have one large adult man and a two- to three-year-old child come to class (a father/child pair would be convenient). Ask a helper to keep the toddler occupied until you call for them and have the man settle inconspicuously in your class.

The object of this lesson is to communicate that it is not the tool but the power behind the tool that counts. We are the tools God uses to accomplish his work. It is God’s grace and power at work in us that accomplishes the task.

Place both hammers on the table. Ask the class, “Which hammer would you rather have to remove a rock in your garden at home?” Of course they will say the sledgehammer. Ask why they would pick the sledgehammer over the smaller hammer.

Now ask your two volunteers to come forward. Have the large man pick up the smaller hammer and have the toddler hold the handle of the sledgehammer, which you can stand on its head in front of him. Tell the class that this time the hammer comes with the person shown to use it. Now ask them which they would rather have.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- If you used the small hammer with {man’s name} to break up a rock in your garden, who would get more credit for breaking up the rock, the hammer or {man’s name}?
(They should answer the man would get more credit as it would be his strength that accomplished the task and not the large capability of the tool.)

- How does this illustration help us to understand why God would choose Gideon?

(Gideon is like the little hammer that cannot do much on his own. But, with the power of God behind him Gideon could do anything. In the end, God would get the credit.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page 46—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- Why did God want Gideon to tear down the statue?
(God is a jealous God who commands us to have no other gods before him.)
- What did Gideon think would happen when he wrecked the idol?
(He thought the people of the town would be very angry, but he trusted the Lord and did as the Lord instructed.)
- What happened as a result of Gideon’s courageous act?
(The courage of Gideon began to spread through the town.)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Who Does the Choosing?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ lyrics to the hymn “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

In the middle of the class time, pick out a child and say, “I choose you.” Then explain that you are going to have that child lead the whole class in singing the last verse of “Great Is Thy Faithfulness.” Interview your student in front of the class and ask her the following questions:

- **Are you an accomplished choir conductor?**
(She is probably going to answer, “No, I have never directed a choir.” Explain to her that you are going to help her.)

- **Do you know how to lead a whole class in “Great is Thy Faithfulness”?**
(She will likely answer, “No, I don’t.” Then explain that you are going to help her.)

- **Do you know the first words of the hymn?**
(Again they will likely answer, “No.” That is when you pull out the words and coach them through the entire process and have the class sing the song.)

Finally, help the class to see that what you did was like what God did with Gideon. God called Gideon, God gave him a task, and God helped him complete the task. Help the children see that Gideon could not brag about what he did any more than the child in your class could take credit for leading your class in a song. It was God’s idea, God’s help, and God’s strength that was at work in this story.

LESSON 46 - GOD CALLS GIDEON

