

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**
It Is Not the Man but God Who Delivers
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ large sledgehammer
 - ✓ normal size hammer
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN**
Worship God Alone
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
Baal
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ modeling clay
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**
Baal Can’t Help You
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ the idols of Baal made during Activity Time
 - ✓ paper and pens or pencils

TOTAL 80 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.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Baal

Baal was the god whom the Canaanites claimed could control the rain and fertility. Baal was the chief god of the Canaanites. God told Israel that he was taking them to a land that would not be irrigated but would require the Israelites to depend on him for rain (see Deuteronomy 11:10–12).

It is no wonder the pagans trusted in a false god to bring them rain, and it is obvious why God did not want his people to be tempted by the false god of the Canaanites. God alone would bring the people rain. Baal was merely an idol that could do nothing.

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

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.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

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

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Worship God Alone

Read Deuteronomy 7:1–5 and compare it with Judges 1:27–33. Then read Judges 2:11–15 and answer the following questions.

- What was the warning that God gave Israel?
(If they do not destroy the people of Canaan, they will be tempted by the idolatry of the Canaanites.)
- What happened to Israel when they did not annihilate the Canaanites?
(They ended up doing exactly what God said they would do and worshipped the Canaanites' false gods.)
- Why was it mercy that God raised up Gideon?
(God could have destroyed the Israelites for their rampant idolatry. God destroyed Achan and his whole family for stealing the gold, but here, even though Gideon's own father had an altar to Baal, God not only spared Gideon, he used Gideon to deliver Israel from the Midianites.)
- What can we learn from God's favor toward Israel to guide our lives?
(If we do not follow God's Word, we serve other gods. In the Bible, it is clear that we have only two options: we are either for God or against him. If we do not worship Christ, we worship

other gods. Though we are not tempted by Baal-worship, we do worship money, position, power, sports figures, comfort, prosperity, and many other worldly pursuits that take the place of God in our hearts.)

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 15 MIN

Baal

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ modeling clay

Have the children make a Baal idol out of modeling clay. Then draw the children out by asking them if their idols are any different in power from the idols that Israel made. (No, all idols are powerless.) Use the bonus object lesson if you have time for further discussion or direct the class to simply destroy their idols when you have finished.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

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

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Baal Can't Help You

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ the idols of Baal made during Activity Time
- ✓ paper and pens or pencils

The point of this exercise is to help the children see the foolishness of serving idols.

Have the children place their Baal idol in front of them. Pass out paper and pencils, and tell the children to record everything they hear their idol say and everything they see their idol do. (None of the clay idols will do anything.)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:2 to see how Paul describes the idols of the Israelites. Then have the children write down something they remember God saying or doing. Try to help each child remember and write down something. Then read them all to the class and celebrate our wonderful God who saves us from our sin and speaks to us through his Word.

Direct the class to destroy their idols when the discussion is finished.