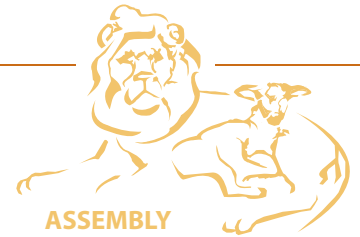


## GIDEON'S VICTORY

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JUDGES 7



*The following are some ideas for creative ways that you can present this material.*

## LESSON IDEAS

### GOD IS A PRESENT HELP IN OUR TIME OF NEED

**Supplies:**

- a blindfold
- an 8 foot 2x4 board for a plank

Explain to the children how God helped Gideon not to be afraid by telling him to go down to the enemy's camp and listen to what they were saying. When Gideon did this, he discovered that the Midianites were afraid of the Israelites! That gave Gideon great courage.

Ask for a volunteer to walk along the wooden plank blindfolded. After blindfolding them, turn them around once or twice to disorient them but not so much to make them dizzy. Get them started on the board with a teacher on each side to act as spotters. Let them try walking the plank on their own. Then encourage the other children to speak out directions while you help the volunteer balance with your hand. Afterward, ask the children who walked on the plank if the instructions helped them stay balanced.

Wrap things up by sharing Psalm 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." Ask the children, "How was this verse true for Gideon?"

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### PUPPET SHOW

#### Supplies:

- a wise old man hand puppet for the Narrator
- five hand puppets that look like soldiers. Gideon and the two Israelite soldiers can be identified with blue material. Gideon's leadership rank can be identified with a gold sash. Two Midianite soldiers can be identified with red material.
- have an elevated stage area for puppets which includes a background that will highlight the puppets' activity.

**Narrator:** Good morning children. Welcome to our puppet show. Today we are going to tell the story of the amazing thing God did when Gideon and the Israelites defeated the Midianites. Are you ready? Are you excited? Well let's begin!

Meet Gideon. (Gideon appears on stage.)

Gideon is the leader of Israel's army. He loves God and wants to obey God no matter what. And in the battle with the evil Midianites God shows Gideon and Israel that God is stronger than any army – no matter how big.

**Gideon:** Good morning boys and girls! My name is Gideon. As the leader of Israel's army I had to fight many battles. But no battle was more amazing than the day we fought the Midianites in the land of Canaan!

**Narrator:** That's right! You see, on that day God told Gideon to fight the Midianites, an enemy whose army numbered in the thousands! Can you say thousands? That's a big number and the Midianite army was a BIGGGGG ARMY! Gideon, why don't you tell us what God told you the day before Israel was going to fight the Midianites.

**Gideon:** Well, kids! God told me that Israel had to learn that God was stronger than any army – no matter how big and strong. The only way we could learn this was to send most of our soldiers HOME. That's right, HOME! So, the Lord had me send most of the soldiers of Israel's army HOME! Can you believe that? I mean – we had thousands of soldiers who were ready to fight, but we only used three hundred to fight and defeat an army that had ten thousand soldiers! Wow!

**Narrator:** Go on Gideon. Tell us what happened.



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**Gideon:** Well, to be honest, when God said that Israel should fight the Midianites with only 300 of our men, I was scared. Their army was so big and strong and terrible looking, and ours was so small! The Lord said He himself would see to it that we would win, even though we only had 300 men. Did the Lord really mean what he said? Well, the night before we were going to fight, another Israelite and I snuck up real close to the tents where the Midianites were sleeping. When we got to their camp we heard two of their soldiers talking inside of a tent. This is what they said:

(Stage Direction: Two Midianite puppets on stage.)

**Midianite soldier #1:** I had a dream. A round loaf of bread tumbled down the hill and struck the Midianite camp. It struck the tent so hard it collapsed! But what could that mean?

**Midianite soldier #2:** The bread must represent the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God will defeat our army and give the victory to Gideon.

(Stage Direction: Midianite soldiers leave the stage.)

**Narrator:** When Gideon heard the dream of the Midianite soldiers, he became excited. In his heart he knew that God was on his side and the side of Israel. He returned to where the army of Israel was camped ...

**Gideon:** When I returned, I called out "Get up everyone. God is on our side. We must attack the Midianites now!"



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**Narrator:** So with that, Gideon told the men to come with him, to bring their torches but to place them in empty jars so that they wouldn't be seen, and bring with them their trumpets as well. Gideon and his 300 men secretly went to where the Midianites were camping. They surrounded the camp and waited for Gideon's command.

**Gideon:** After we had surrounded the camp, I gave the order for all of the men to blow their trumpets and smash the jars they were carrying so that their torches could be seen. The Midianites awoke and were scared. They couldn't see anything in the dark except our torches. They couldn't hear anything except the sound of 300 trumpets blaring. We looked and sounded like a huge army. They became so afraid that they ran away. We had beaten the Midianites and we never even fought them!

**Narrator:** So that is the story of God's miraculous defeat of the Midianites. When you have God on your side it doesn't matter how big your enemies are or how small you are – for God can do anything for those who trust in him!



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### CIRCLE TIME

Have the class sit in a circle. Tell the children that the God in the story we read today is the same God who cares for them today and is at work in their lives. Use some of the following conversation starters with the group:

- Ask the class to share where God has done a miraculous thing in their lives. Thank the Lord for each of these.
- Ask the class to share where they need God to do a miraculous thing in their life or their families. Pray for these together after each person shares.
- Have the teacher share from their own life stories where God has done miraculous things. Thank the Lord for each of these.
- Share the gospel. The greatest miracle in all of history is Jesus Christ, the God-Man, coming to earth to live a holy life and die for all of our sins. Those who believe in Jesus and turn away from their sins become saved from the wrath (punishment) of God. What a miracle!



## GIDEON'S VICTORY

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JUDGES 7

### Where Is Jesus?

*Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.*

Gideon's faith to go into battle with so few men did not come quickly. In fact, God was patient with Gideon and built his faith with many miraculous signs, the most important of which was the visit from the pre-incarnate Christ (the angel of the Lord in Judges 6:11-24). In Judges 6:16, 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."

Our salvation comes today as it did to Gideon then; we can only be saved if the Lord saves. We, like Gideon, face impossible enemies in sin and death. Only the blood of the Redeemer can bring us the victory.

The story of Gideon is a story of God saving His people. Gideon followed the Lord in faith during the battle, but it wasn't long after the battle ended that Gideon fell into sin. He made a golden ephod (a vest-like outer garment). All of Israel came to see it and sinned in its presence. The house of God was in Shiloh and it was there that the priest wore a golden ephod. Gideon created his own alternate place of worship. One day a deliverer would come who would not sin – Jesus the Lord.

