



God Helps Gideon Defeat the Midianites

Judges 6:1-16; 7:1-24

The first- and second-graders in your class express their worries in many ways. Some children will repeatedly bring up an incident or concern in conversation, in an attempt to find reason and reassurance. Other children may avoid activities that remind them of a worry. However children express their worries, use this lesson to remind them that God is bigger than any of our fears.



► Bible Point

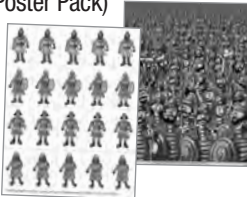

We can trust God with the future.

Key Verse

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).


Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will trust God with their futures.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Lean on Me <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Help a partner cross the room.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Bible Exploration	Many Midianites <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Cover “Israel” with “Midianites” as they hear of the awful things the Midianites did to the Israelites.	Bible, map, marker, tape, electric fan Teacher Pack: “Midianite” cards, “Gideon’s Army Surrounds the Midianites” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	Carefully separate the cards and set them in a pile. Write “Israel” in large letters on a map.
	Hideout! <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Hide in a “fort” as they hear how God called Gideon to fight the Midianites.		
	Trumpets and Torches <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Make trumpets and charge into the “Midianite” camp to scare away the Midianites.	My Bible Fun, 1 cardboard tube per child, transparent tape, scissors, markers, electric fan Teacher Pack: “Midianite” cards 	Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p>3</p> <p>Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p>Blown Away <i>(about 10 min.)</i></p> <p>Write their worries, and then blow the worries away with a fan.</p>	<p>markers, electric fan, CD player, one copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson)</p> <p>Teacher Pack: CD, "Midianite" cards</p> 	
<p>4</p> <p>Lasting Impressions</p>	<p>Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i></p> <p>Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	My Bible Fun	
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i></p> <p>Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>	My Bible Fun	Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each My Bible Fun.

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



God Helps Gideon Defeat the Midianites

Judges 6:1-16; 7:1-24

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Judges Were Called by God When Crises Erupted

.....

This lesson begins a section looking at the period of the judges. After Joshua died, there was no immediate, clear leader of the people of Israel. Instead, God raised up different leaders at different times for different tasks, and they all received special power from God to do what God wanted them to do. These leaders were called judges, though they didn't function primarily as arbitrators or administrators of justice. In most cases, they were military leaders, called upon to deliver Israel from foreign enemies.

God Calls the Unlikely Gideon

.....

Gideon's description of himself might remind us of the great King David, who was yet to come. Both were the youngest in their families. Gideon did not think of himself as a military leader, but God knew what Israel needed. Israel didn't need a leader who would trust in his military ability; rather, Israel needed a leader who would humbly rely on God for guidance and strength.

God Wins the Battle Against the Midianites

.....

God's instructions to whittle Gideon's army to 300 men seem absurd. But God wanted the people of Israel to see that they were saved by God's power rather than their own military might. We aren't told why the manner of the soldiers' drinking—either by stooping to drink the water directly or cupping it to their mouths—was significant. Perhaps it was simply a way to reduce the number of men; perhaps it was a method to choose those who were most alert. The 300 men who kept their heads up may have demonstrated an alertness that was lacking in the men who stooped to drink.

It's astonishing that the Israelites didn't strike anyone with a sword at the beginning of the battle. After raising their torches and blowing their trumpets, Gideon and his soldiers held their positions while the Midianites turned upon one another with their swords (Judges 7:21-22)—*God* won the battle for them.

The Jesus Connection

.....

When we have a relationship with Jesus, no matter what happens to us, we can be sure he'll be there.

Think back on Gideon's feelings of inadequacy. When have you felt that way? How did God help you through it? How did that experience help grow your faith? Pray that in your inadequacies, God will help you lean on your faith and move forward in confident trust. You can write your prayer here.





Lean on Me Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "So Do Not Fear"
(Isaiah 41:10) (track 2)

1 GETTING STARTED

Lean on Me

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together.

Have kids get in pairs. Say: **You and your partner must stand side by side and each place one arm over your partner's shoulder.** Pause while children follow your instructions. **Now decide which partner is wearing the most blue.** Pause. **That person will be the Hopper. If you're a Hopper, lift the leg that is closest to your partner.** Pause while Hoppers follow your instructions. **If you're a Hopper, hold the arm that is farthest from your partner behind your back. When I turn on the music, partners will work together to get to the other side of the room and back. Ready?**

Turn on the CD to "So Do Not Fear" (Isaiah 41:10) (track 2), and let kids begin moving across the room. When partners return, have them trade roles and play again. When everyone has been a Hopper, turn off the CD player and gather the children.

Say: **The Bible tells us that God helps us, kind of like the way you helped the Hoppers! Listen while I read our Key Verse, Isaiah 41:10.** Read aloud the Key Verse: **"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to be a Hopper?
- When you weren't a Hopper, how did you help your partner?
- What does *dismayed* mean?
- How does God help us when we're afraid or feel disappointed?

Say: **God gives us strength when we're afraid or sad. He holds us up and helps us, just as you helped your partners in our game. God is strong, so we can trust him with our futures! In our Bible story today, we'll learn how God helped a man who was afraid. Gideon learned that ► WE CAN TRUST GOD WITH THE FUTURE.**



2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Many Midianites

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle, and then tape the map to the floor or a table in the middle of the circle. Place an electric fan nearby, pointing right at the map. (You won't use the fan until the last Bible Exploration activity.)

Show the "Gideon's Army Surrounds the Midianites" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack). Say: **God's special people were called the Israelites. They lived in a place called Israel. We'll pretend that this is a map of Israel.** Open your Bible to Judges 6, and show children the passage. **The Bible tells us about a time Israel was taken over by some really bad people called Midianites. The Bible says that the Midianites were like swarms of locusts because there were so many of them!**

Give each child a "Midianite" card. Explain that these represent the Midianites who swarmed into Israel. Tell children that the Midianites did awful things to the people of Israel. As you tell the bad things the Midianites did, point to two or three children. Have them walk their Midianites to the map and lay their cards on the map.

Say: **The Midianites destroyed the plants the Israelites had planted.** (Point.) **They camped on people's land.** (Point.) **They took the Israelites' sheep** (point), **cattle** (point), and **donkeys.** (Point.) **The Midianites took over the Israelites' land** (point) **and forced the people into hiding.** (Point.) **Look at the map! Israel was just like that—covered with mean, nasty Midianites. Most of the Israelites left their homes and went up into the mountains where they could hide.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How do you think the Israelites felt about the Midianites?
- What do you think the Israelites thought about their future?

Say: ► **WE CAN TRUST GOD WITH THE FUTURE.** Even when things seem scary and we don't know what will happen, God takes care of us.



Many Midianites Supplies

- Bible
- map
- marker
- tape
- electric fan

Teacher Pack

- "Midianite" cards
- "Gideon's Army Surrounds the Midianites" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)

Many Midianites Easy Prep

Carefully separate the cards and set them in a pile. Write "Israel" in large letters on a map.





Hideout!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's pretend we're the Israelites, hiding from these terrible Midianites. The Bible says the Israelites built shelters in caves. Let's use our chairs and tables to make a hideout to keep us safe from the Midianites.**

Help children use chairs and tables to make a simple "fort" in which everyone can sit comfortably for the remainder of the Bible story. Hurriedly gather children inside, as if you're fleeing from Midianites. As you tell the following story, occasionally peek out to "look" for approaching Midianites.

Say: **An Israelite man named Gideon was threshing his wheat in a wine press. A wine press is kind of like a little swimming pool, where he could be out of sight. While Gideon was threshing, an angel came and spoke to him. The angel told Gideon to go and save Israel from the Midianites.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did Gideon show that he trusted God with the future?
- Why do you think Gideon trusted God?
- How can we trust God with the future?

Say: **Gideon was afraid! "But Lord, how can I save Israel? My family is the weakest in the whole country, and I am the least in my family." But God said, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together" (Judges 6:15-16). That's just like our Key Verse! Read aloud the Key Verse from Isaiah 41:10: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." So Gideon agreed to fight the Midianites.**



Trumpets and Torches

What You'll Do

Peek out from your hideout.

Say: **There are a lot of Midianites out there. Do you have any ideas for how Gideon could fight all those men? Allow children to share their ideas. God had a different way for Gideon to fight. First, he helped Gideon choose a small army—only 300 men! And he didn't give them swords or spears. He gave them trumpets, torches, and pitchers. Let's make some trumpets so we can see how this amazing story ends.**

Have kids turn to the "Trust Trumpets" section of their My Bible Fun pages. Distribute cardboard tubes, scissors, tape, and markers, and allow children to decorate their Trust Trumpets. Each child can cut out the Trust Trumpet, wrap it around a cardboard tube, and tape it in place. When everyone has a trumpet, continue the story.

Say: **That night, Gideon's men lit their torches and then turned the pitchers upside down over the flames to keep them dim.**

Whisper: **They took their torches and trumpets and sneaked up on the Midianite camp.** Motion for kids to follow as you sneak out of the hideout. Tiptoe to the map with the paper "Midianites" scattered on it from the "Many Midianites" activity.

Whisper: **When Gideon gave the signal, the men broke the pitchers so the torches blazed. Then they blew their trumpets loudly. And they shouted, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!"** (Judges 7:20). **Are you ready?**

Nod to give the "go" signal and hurry to the "camp" (the map), yelling into your "trumpets." Gather kids in a half-circle around the "Midianites," positioning yourself near the fan.

Say: **The Midianites were so afraid of the noise and the lights** (turn the fan on high, scattering the cards) **that they ran away! Some of the Midianites were so confused that they attacked their own men! God helped Gideon defeat the Midianites.** Leave the fan on until all the cards have blown away from the map.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was Gideon worried about at the beginning of the story?**
- **How did he learn to trust God with the future?**
- **Why does God want you to trust him with your future?**

Say: **Gideon was worried that the Midianites might hurt him or take his land. But when Gideon trusted in God's help, God used Gideon to do amazing things. ► WE CAN TRUST GOD WITH THE FUTURE, too.**



Trumpets and Torches Supplies

- My Bible Fun
- 1 cardboard tube per child
- transparent tape
- scissors
- markers
- electric fan

Teacher Pack

- "Midianite" cards

Trumpets and Torches Easy Prep

- Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.





Blown Away Supplies

markers
 electric fan
 CD player
 one copy per child of
 the lyrics page (at the
 end of the lesson)
Teacher Pack
 CD: "So Do Not Fear"
 (Isaiah 41:10) (track 2)
 "Midianite" cards

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Blown Away


What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Let each child collect a "Midianite" card from the floor.

Say: **We may not face Midianites today, but we do have worries that make us feel like Gideon did. Turn to a partner, and share something that's coming up that's making you feel worried. Maybe you're nervous about leaving your dog at home while you're on vacation. Or you might be worried that your best friend won't be in your class next year. Talk to your partner, and then use markers to draw a picture of your worry on the back of the card.**

While partners are sharing and drawing, quietly play the song "So Do Not Fear" (Isaiah 41:10) (track 2 on the CD). When the song ends, have children bring their cards and sit in a circle.

Have kids place their cards in a pile on the floor. Lead children in singing "So Do Not Fear" (Isaiah 41:10), referring to the copies of the lyrics if necessary. As you sing, turn the fan on high to scatter the cards.

 **So do not fear,
 For I am with you.
 Do not be dismayed,
 For I am your God.**

**So do not fear,
 For I am with you.
 Do not be dismayed,
 For I am your God.**

**I will strengthen you
 And help you;
 I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**

**I will strengthen you
 And help you;
 I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"So Do Not Fear" (Isaiah 41:10) by John J. DiModica. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What were some of your worries?
- Do you trust that God will take care of that worry? Why or why not?

Say: Remember, our Key Verse from Isaiah 41:10 says, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Let’s show that we trust God to take care of these worries!

.....

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do

Say: Let’s think about how ► **WE CAN TRUST GOD WITH THE FUTURE.**

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges in their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Tell a friend that he or she can trust God with the future.
- Take a walk with a family member and thank God for his plans for your future.
- Pray and tell God you trust him with your future completely.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What’s a practical way you’re going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: Let’s show that ► **WE CAN TRUST GOD WITH THE FUTURE** by following through on our Daily Challenges.



Daily Challenges
Supplies

.....
My Bible Fun





Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

My Bible Fun

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each My Bible Fun student book.

Weaving Faith at Home

Send the letter to parents home with your kids or give it to parents when they pick up their children. This is a great way to show families they're important to your church and to support their role as spiritual leaders to their children.

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how we can trust God with the future. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids. Pray: **Loving God, we're so glad that we can trust you with our futures. We thank you for being a mighty and loving God who strengthens and protects us. As we offer these worries to you, replace our fear with your peace. In Jesus' name, amen.**





Lyrics ■■■■

So Do Not Fear (Isaiah 41:10)

So do not fear,
For I am with you.
Do not be dismayed,
For I am your God.

So do not fear,
For I am with you.
Do not be dismayed,
For I am your God.

I will strengthen you
And help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

I will strengthen you
And help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"So Do Not Fear" (Isaiah 41:10) by John J. DiModica. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



OK
TO COPY



