



Session

8

# GIDEON DEFEATED MIDIAN



## Judges 7–8

After calling together the nation, Gideon secured around 32,000 men who were committed to fight alongside him against Midian. God wanted Gideon and the people of Israel to know that God was the rescuer of Israel and that it was not through any of their actions that victory would come. In order to make that point, God told Gideon to approach the troops and tell them that anyone who was worried could freely leave. 22,000 of them left for home, leaving 10,000 men in Gideon's army.

Watching as more than two-thirds of his army abandoned him, Gideon must have felt a bit of a pit in his stomach. God then announced, likely to Gideon's dismay, that there were still too many men to win the battle against the Midianites. Instructed to gather at the river, Gideon separated the troops into two groups based on how they chose to drink water from the river. At the end of this test there was one small 300-man group and a significantly larger 9,700-man group. Gideon was again shocked when God sent home the 9,700 men and left the 300 for Gideon to lead into battle.

God gave Gideon further instructions for his 300 men. God directed Gideon to go into the Midianite camp so that Gideon would understand that God had indeed given the Midianites into Israel's hands. In camp, Gideon and his helper overheard a conversation which explained a dream one of the Midianite soldiers had. The soldier basically confirmed for Gideon that God was going to win this battle.

Israel, when they took over the promised land under Joshua, became accustomed to odd battle plans delivered from God. Gideon had an equally odd plan where Gideon was instructed to give his men only a torch, a jar, and a trumpet—certainly nontraditional weapons of war. While Midian slept, Gideon and his army surrounded the camp, uncovered their lights, smashed their jars, blew their trumpets, and shouted. The sound caused such confusion in the Midianite camp that the Midianites defeated themselves.

## SESSION FOCUS

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Judges 7–8

**MEMORY VERSE:** Ephesians 2:8-9

**BIBLE VERSE:** Proverbs 16:18

**TEXT TRUTH:** We were made to bring glory to God.

**BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT:** Knows the Bible teaches people how God wants them to live. Memorizes individual Bible verses. Locates many books in the Bible without assistance.

### BIBLE STUDY

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *copy paper, adult scissors, “Judges” (Books of the Bible Posters), “Torch Bundle” (Slide)*
- Examine the Text:** *Bible, “Text Truth 8” (Slide), plastic pitchers, toys trumpets, paper torches (brown construction paper; red, orange, and yellow paper), “Christ in Context: Judges” (Poster Pack)*
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *orange, yellow, and red copy paper; brown construction paper; tape; adult scissors; “Ephesians 2:8-9” (Poster Pack)*

- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

### APPLY THE TRUTH

(20 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Review:** *flashlight, “Review Questions” (Printable)*
- Tech Connect** *(Optional): a device with the LifeWay Kids app*

### ACTIVITIES

(20 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *“Bible Book Cards” (Printable), Bibles, toy trumpet*
- Move:** *dry erase board and marker*
- Make:** *ice cream cones, crunchy orange chips, hand sanitizer, “Allergy Alert” (Printable)*
- Explore:** *“Fasolino Prayer Requests” (Printables), construction paper, scissors, glue*

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## GIDEON DEFEATED MIDIAN

### Judges 7–8

*God was with Gideon. Gideon blew a ram's horn to call soldiers to come join him. He sent messengers throughout the land to gather more soldiers.*

*Gideon and the soldiers gathered and camped. But God had another message for Gideon, "You have too many people. Tell the ones who are afraid to go home." God didn't want Israel to think they defeated Midian. God wanted the people to understand that God would defeat Midian. So 22,000 soldiers left and 10,000 stayed.*

*God said, "You still have too many people. Take them to the water for a test." Only the ones who brought water to their mouths were allowed to stay. The men who put their faces in the water were sent home. Now Gideon had 300 soldiers. God again promised Gideon that God would defeat Midian.*

*God helped Gideon form a plan. The 300 men formed 3 groups, each with 100 men. Each man carried a trumpet in one hand. In the other hand, he had an empty water pitcher with a torch inside it. The 3 groups spread out around the sleeping Midianite soldiers. Gideon and the men suddenly blew the trumpets. They broke the pitchers. They held their torches up and shouted, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon."*

*The other army of soldiers woke up and God caused them to start fighting each other. God defeated the Midianites. Gideon led the Israelites to defeat Midian with God's help. The Israelites had peace for 40 years.*

*Sadly, Gideon did not always obey God. Gideon became selfish and wanted the people to praise him, so he made an idol for the Israelites to worship. Gideon helped the Israelites sin instead of helping them worship the one true God. When Gideon died, the Israelites continued to sin and sin and sin.*

### CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of Judges highlights the consequences of sin and our need for a Savior. The judges were temporary deliverers rescuing the Israelites from their enemies. Jesus is the sinless deliverer who, through His death on the cross and resurrection, has defeated our enemy, Satan.

### DON'T FORGET TO SEND HOME THESE FAMILY RESOURCES EACH WEEK:

- "Explore the Bible at Home" (Printables)
- Explore the Bible: Kids Family Cards

## BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

### TOOLS:

- Jump In: copy paper, adult scissors, "Judges" (Books of the Bible Posters), "Torch Bundle" (Slide)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, "Text Truth 8" (Slide), plastic pitchers, toy trumpets, paper torches (brown construction paper; red, yellow, and orange paper), "Christ in Context: Judges" (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: orange, yellow, and red copy paper; brown construction paper; tape; adult scissors; "Ephesians 2:8-9" (Poster Pack)
- Prayer: Family Cards

Need an Opening Activity? Choose one of the activities in the *Activities* section and adapt it to introduce the session.

### JUMP IN

- ☐ *Before group, prepare strips of paper with the words **Afraid**, **Drinks water like a dog**, and **Drinks water with hand written on them**. Prepare different amounts of the strips to give to your group, with the fewest strips being **Drinks water with hand**.*
- Give each child a strip of paper as they come in the room. Ask everyone to gather in a circle. Inform your kids that you will call out a phrase and if their paper says that phrase, they are to sit down. Call out "afraid." Say: "In our story today, God used Gideon to save the Israelites. Unfortunately, Gideon had too many people for his army. He told everyone who was afraid to go home." Instruct these kids to sit down. Call out: "Drinks water like a dog." Continue: "Gideon's army was still too big, so he told all of the men who drank water like a dog at the stream to go home." Tell these kids to sit down. Conclude: "This left Gideon with 300 men. These were the men who drank the water with their hand." Guide the remaining kids to sit. Display the "Judges" poster and the "Torch Bundle" slide.
- Finish: "Gideon then used the remaining men to defeat the Midianites. Our 'Judges' poster tells us that 'Gideon is a great warrior in the Bible. He defeated 135,000 Midianites with 300 men, 300 trumpets and 300 torches under God's power.' Our object this week is a 'Torch Bundle.' This is similar to one of the items God asked Gideon to use to defeat the Midianites. Gideon's army brought glory to God. Let's learn more!"

### EXAMINE THE TEXT

- ☐ *Before group, gather plastic pitchers, toy trumpets (or have kids pretend to play a trumpet), and paper torches.*
- Allow your kids to pick an object and to form three equal groups standing on different walls. While you are telling the Bible story, allow your kids to act out the story. Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask a volunteer to read Judges 7:16. Ask: "What did Gideon ask all the men to carry into battle?"
- Ask a volunteer to read Judges 7:21-22. Ask: "What happened in the Midianite camp? The Midianites woke up and began fighting each other. God wanted the Midianites to know that He was in control. Gideon and his army were able to defeat the Midianites with only torches, pitchers, and trumpets. Gideon and his army brought glory to God by obeying God."

- Display the Text Truth. Say: “Our Text Truth this week says that **we were made to bring glory to God**. Like this battle, God has a plan. We might not always understand His plan and it might seem strange. However, if we obey His instructions and listen to what He tells us to do, we will bring glory to God. **We were made to bring glory to God.**”
- Display the “Christ in Context: Judges” poster and read it aloud. Ask: “Did Jesus bring glory to God? Yes!”

### PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the Session 8 video.
- Ask: “Who did Joel meet? What did he learn about Gideon and our purpose?”

### MEMORY VERSE

- Bonus Verse Option: The Memory Verse activity each week is focused on the monthly Memory Verse, Ephesians 2:8-9. If your kids quickly memorize the Memory Verse, you may opt to challenge them to learn an additional weekly Bonus Verse. This week’s Bonus Verse is Proverbs 16:18.*
- Before group, print the verse in a large font on orange, red, and yellow construction paper. Print the verse so that you can cut strips with one to three words per strip. Mix up the verses and place them in the top of a rolled-up piece of brown construction paper to make a “torch.” Display the “Ephesians 2:8-9” poster.*
- Say the verse in short segments. Ask your kids to repeat the verse after you.
- Ask your kids to form three groups. Assign each group a color. Inform them that they will take turns racing to the opposite wall and choose one strip of paper from the torch. They are to race back to their group and continue play until they have gathered all their torch pieces. They should then construct the verse in the correct order. The first team to complete the verse in order and shout it out loud, wins the game.
- Say the verse as a group to finish the activity.

### PRAYER

- Distribute Family Cards to each kid.
- Say: “Our object today is the ‘Torch Bundle.’ Gideon brought glory to God when he defeated the Midianites with his army. Gideon and his army obeyed God’s instructions. We were all made for a purpose. If we listen and obey God’s plans for our lives, we will bring glory to Him. **We were made to bring glory to God.**”
- Pray with your kids.

## APPLY THE TRUTH (20 MINUTES)

### TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Review: flashlight, “Review Questions” (Printable)
- Tech Connect (Optional): a device with the LifeWay Kids app

### EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and lead kids to find today’s pages, “Gideon Defeated Midian.”
- Explain “Who Were the Midianites?”
- Help kids discover the message in “Coded Vowels.”
- Choose a kid to read “Startling Behavior.”
- Direct kids to complete the matching activity, “God’s Weird, Amazing Plans.”
- Select a volunteer to review today’s object, the “Torch Bundle.”

### REVIEW

- Ask your kids to form a circle. Shine the flashlight on someone’s shoes and ask them a question from the “Review Questions.” Assist as needed. Use questions from different sessions to review previous weeks’ material. Ask boys and girls to repeat verses and Text Truths.

### TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to Small Group, download the LifeWay Kids app. Use the activity labeled “Explorer Plus” in the Explore the Bible: Kids section of the app.