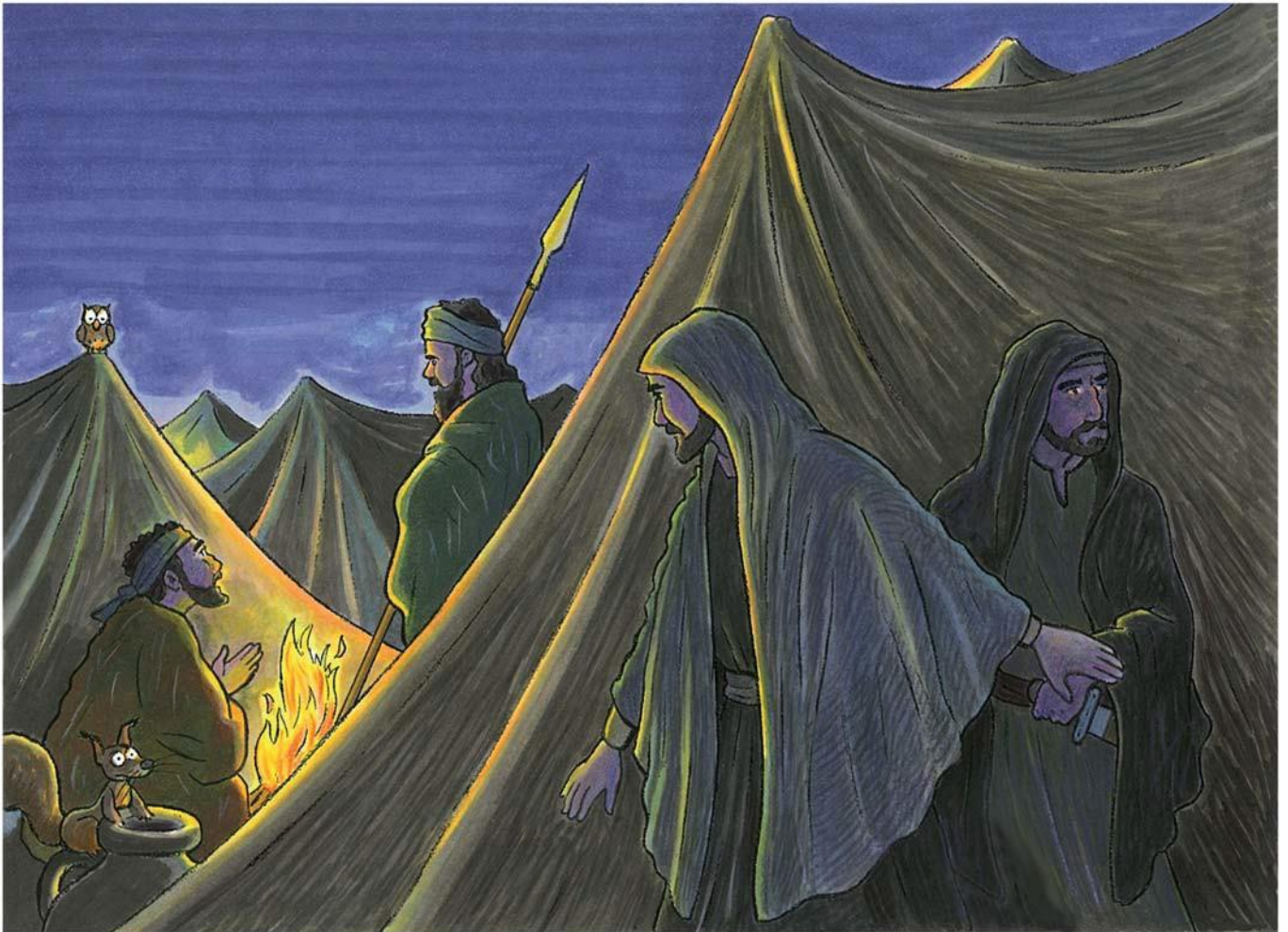


GIDEON

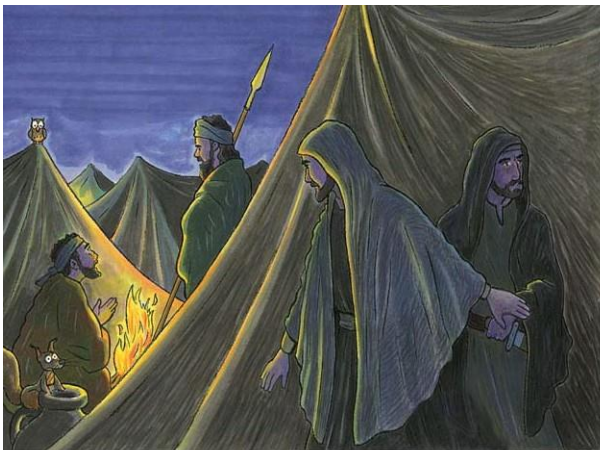
Judges 6:1–40; 7:1–25



Contents

Message	God hears the cry of his people and answers it at the right time.
Learning Objectives	The children will learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What it means to have trust in God.■ God gives us guidance on how to live our lives.
Bible Text	Judges 6:1-40; 7:1-25

Gideon



The Israelites lived in a beautiful and fertile land. Over time they forgot about God. They no longer remembered that He gave them the land. Instead, they worshipped, built altars and brought their offerings to Baal and Ashtoreth.

Whatever was sown by the Israelites, warriors attacked and took it at harvest time. The Israelites cried out to God for His help. God sent a prophet to remind them that God was with them and tell them that what they were doing did not please Him.

One day while threshing wheat in the wilderness, Gideon saw an angel sitting under a tree. The angel said, "The Lord is with you!" The angel promised Gideon, "I will be with you and you will conquer all your enemies!"

Afterwards, Gideon was convinced that the Angel of the Lord spoke to him. Gideon sent messengers to tell the Israelites to prepare for battle. He blew his trumpet and called his soldiers together. He felt the strength of God within him.

Gideon looked at the great number of men who had gathered to fight for the Midianites. Gideon was frightened and prayed, "Lord, You have promised to be with us. Please, help me!"

The Lord told him, "You have far too many men with you. They might think that they have won the battle by themselves. Send home everyone who is afraid!" Twenty-two thousand men returned home, only ten thousand stayed with Gideon. The Lord spoke again, "I shall see you win this battle. You still have too many men. Take them down to the water and let them drink. Each one who laps the water like a dog will go with you. All those who bend down on their knees to drink should go home!" After this test, only three hundred soldiers remained.

God told Gideon, "With these men, I will conquer your enemy." God told Gideon to go into the enemy camp at night with one of his servants. They approached one of the enemy tents. Unnoticed, they overheard two men who were talking.

One man said to the other, "I had a dream. In my dream, a barley loaf rolled down the hillside. It moved toward our camp and flattened our tents. There was complete chaos. What can it all mean?" The other man replied, "It has to mean we will be defeated! God is with them." When Gideon heard this, he thanked the Lord and returned to his men.

Gideon ordered, "Put the torches inside jars so that we will not be seen. We will divide into three groups and surround the enemy camp. Watch me closely and do what I do! I will blow my trumpet, break the jar and raise my burning torch. I will make a tremendous noise and shout, 'Victory for the sword of the Lord!'" With God's help, the Midianites were defeated and their great army fled. The people of Israel lived in peace for many years.

Suggestions for the Teacher

Lead-In

Show the picture to the children. Discuss with them what they see. Ask what she/he may feel....

Let some of the children play the drinking water story in a role-play. Instruct them before.

Provide disguise / fancy dress and swords, shields, a big tub of water, cups....

Lesson Instructions

Begin telling the story...

Discuss with the children...

- How many soldiers were in Gideon's army at the beginning? (22.000)
- How do you think Gideon feels after God tells him there were too many soldiers?
- How many do pass God's test? (300)
- Why does He do so? (He wants them to realise the credit for their success belongs to Him.)
- What does Gideon do? (He blows his trumpet, breaks the jar and raises his burning torch.)
- What does he cry? ('Victory for the sword of the Lord!')
- What happens? (With God's help, the Midianites are defeated and their great army flees.)

Have the children repeat...

- We have trust in God.
- God gives us guidance on how to live our lives.

Real-Life Application (explain the following)

- Were God's instructions to Gideon what he expected? (No)
- However, he trusted that if he followed what God said, his army would defeat the enemy.
- What do we get in our Sunday school lessons? (God's instructions for a successful life of faith.)
- If we do what we think is right - disregarding what we hear - it may not be to our benefit.
- Can you give an example of this? (Your classmate has blamed you and you pay her back.)
- We pray and trust that God hears and answers every prayer at the right time.

Repeat the Message

God hears the cry of his people and answers it at the right time.