

# Session 2

## Gideon

Children learn about the judge, Gideon.

**Scripture:** Judges 6–8

**Supplies:**

- Colouring pages of Gideon
- A candle for each child
- Sticky tape
- Hebrews 13:5–6 on paper for the candles
- Round stickers
- Woolly blanket
- Objects to hide in the welcome game



### Welcome

Send one of the children out the room. Hide an object somewhere in the room, and call the child back inside to find the hidden object. The other children can help him/her by saying whether they're "hot" (moving closer) or "cold" (moving further away).



### Worship

**Settle down ritual:** Use Psalm 23. The children sit down with their legs crossed and their eyes closed. Repeat 3 times: "The Lord is with us." Then say, "Because the Lord is my shepherd, I am not afraid. He leads me through times of darkness and He takes care of me."



### Word

You could do the Working and Playing activities before the storytelling and colour the pictures for the story. Put them in frames and make a photo wall. The leader then takes the children through all the pictures of Gideon's life like a tour guide.

The Israelites were back in the land of Israel after they spent 40 years in the desert, but they didn't have a king yet. They began doing things that God didn't like. Then God allowed the people of Midian to let the Israelites suffer for seven years. The Israelites had to live in mountain caves to hide from the Midianites. Every time the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites burnt it down. They also took all the Israelites' sheep, cows, and donkeys. The Israelites became very poor. Then they began calling out to God again (*refer to last week's 6 moments*).

An angel of God came and sat near a young man who was busy in the fields. This young man's name was Gideon. He was working in a hole in the ground so the Midianites wouldn't see him. He was hiding because he was scared. Then the angel came and told Gideon: "God is with you, brave soldier."

Do you think Gideon was a brave soldier? No, he was actually quite scared and hopeless.

He answered: "Sir, if God is with us, why are things so bad? Why doesn't he do any miracles like when He freed our grandparents from the Egyptians? He doesn't love us anymore and has given us over to the Midianites."

Then God said to him: “Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!” Gideon had many excuses why he couldn’t go and he also wanted all kinds of signs to see if God was really sending him. I wonder about the excuses you might have if God gave you such a big job? *(Give time for the children to react.)*

For Gideon it meant going to war. His excuses were:

he was very poor; he wasn’t important, not even in his own family.

He didn’t think he was good enough to do this work. But God encouraged him. He didn’t have to be strong or rich. God was on his side. *(I wonder if you know that God is on your side. In Hebrews 13:5b–6 God promises: “I will never fail you, I will never abandon you.” So we can say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?”)*

Gideon still wasn’t convinced that he could do it and that God was really sending him. He asked God to kindly show him a miracle. Gideon prepared a goat and made flatbreads that he put on a rock. The angel touched it with the tip of his staff. Fire flared from the rock and consumed the meat and the bread. Then the angel disappeared. Gideon built an altar for God at this place.

That night God gave Gideon his first mission. He said: “Break down the altar that your father built for Baal. Chop down the wooden pole next to it. The wooden pole is only there to remind you of the idol. Build a new altar for me in that place. Make a fire with the pole and offer your dad’s second biggest bull as a burnt offering for me on the altar.”

Gideon took 10 slaves and did as God asked. But guess what? He did it at night. I wonder why he did it at night. He was scared of his father’s family and the town’s people! The people wanted to kill him, but his father stopped them. Their idol was nothing more than a wooden pole.

The Midianites set up camp near the Israelites again and the Israelites feared another war.

Gideon’s second mission from God was to stop the Midianites and chase them away.

Gideon doubted God again and asked for another miracle. He asked something impossible. He took woollen fleece and put it outside, and then asked God to let dew only fall on the fleece and not the ground around it. If God can do that for him, then he’ll believe that God is sending him. The next day it happened just as Gideon asked. The fleece was wet, but the ground around it was dry. It was actually impossible. But Gideon still doubted and asked for another miracle. Again he put the fleece outside and this time asked that the dew would fall only around the fleece and not on it. Again God did as Gideon asked and proved that nothing is impossible for Him. The fleece was dry but the ground around it was wet.

Gideon finally believed that it was really God choosing him to stand up against the Midianites. He gathered as many soldiers as he could, but God wanted them to trust Him and not on their own strength. First he sent home everyone who was scared, and only 10 000 soldiers remained. God said they were still too many, and after God helped Gideon to select soldiers, only 300 men remained. *(Tell the children how God chose the soldiers and the extraordinary way they defeated the Midianites.)*

It sounds impossible that 300 men could win against thousands, but God was on their side. They defeated the Midianites.

God showed Gideon there was no need to be scared with God on his side.

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder how it feels to know that God always keeps his promises.
2. I wonder what God is sending you to do. I wonder what your mission is.
3. I wonder if Gideon’s story makes you feel less scared.



## Working and Playing

- Give each child 10 round stickers. On each of the stickers, they write one of the words: “I-will-never-leave-you. The-Lord-is-my-helper.” Let them put a sticker on each finger and make a fist. Hold it against your chest as a sign that we hold on to God’s promises. They can take these promises home or memorize them.
- Bring a comfortable, woolly blanket. The children can wrap themselves in it to get that feeling of comfort, or they can give each other hugs. God is with them and they don’t have to be afraid.
- Colouring pictures

### Prayer moment:

Children sit on their knees like a tortoise with the head drawn back. The leader then prays the following: “Lord, there are so many things in this world I’m afraid of and that I want to hide from. Help me to remember that You are with me when I’m scared. I am safe in Your arms. Amen.”

### Closing prayer to end the session



