

UNIT VERSE

Do what is right and good
in the Lord's sight.
Deuteronomy 6:18A

GIDEON OBEYED GOD**LEADER BIBLE STUDY****CONTEXT AND COMMENTARY FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND PREPARATION**

(For age-appropriate language, use the Bible story on the following pages.)

LIFE POINT

People can choose to obey God.

LEVEL OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

God allows me to make right and wrong choices.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Judges 6:11-14;
7:1-22

Weekly Verse

"We will serve the Lord our God and obey him."
Joshua 24:24

Christians often include Gideon among the heroes of the Bible, but his story serves as a stark reminder that God, not heroic people, brings victory and does the saving. God chose to work through Gideon to defeat the Midianites, not despite his weaknesses, but because of them. Gideon's family was the weakest in Manasseh, and Gideon was the youngest in his father's family. Gideon had nothing to boast about, no temptation to believe that he had brought about the victory himself. God made it obvious that He won the battle, not the small, weak army Gideon led.

Gideon's story was not the first or last time God worked this way.

Throughout Scripture, we see God repeatedly use unlikely people to fulfill His plans. David was a youngest son and was still out tending sheep, not even considered a prospect among his family, when Samuel went to anoint the new king (1 Samuel 16:5-13). Moses was a fugitive with a speech impediment when God called him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt (Exodus 3-4). Rahab was a woman with questionable morals when God used her to protect the Israelite spies (Joshua 2). Mary was a young, unmarried woman of modest means when God blessed her with the miraculous pregnancy of Jesus (Luke 1:26-38).

God is the hero throughout the Bible, and He is still the hero today.

When He works through you, despite your weakness, how do you respond? Are you tempted to commend yourself for your spiritual maturity and strength, or do you recognize that it is God at work within you, and that anything good in you comes from Him?

When things are going well, our human nature tempts us to trust in our own qualifications, abilities, and strength rather than God's. When we face challenges, on the other hand, we are often tempted to focus on our lack of qualifications rather than on God's abundant power. Many of us shrink back in fear from something He is leading us to do.

Look at Gideon's responses to God's directives. What was Gideon most afraid of? What holds you back from walking in obedience? Do you shy away from gospel conversations because you are worried you are ill-equipped? Do you say no to a ministry opportunity because you do not feel qualified? As you pray this week, ask God to give you the strength to trust Him instead of yourself. Ask Him to help refocus your mind to always give God the glory for the battles He wins.



TELL THE STORY

Move to music. Play "Right and Good." Encourage preschoolers to sing along with the song.

Open a Bible to Deuteronomy 6:18 and read the Unit Verse aloud.

Tell the Bible story. Name different occupations, such as doctors, teachers, police officers, and firefighters. Invite the preschoolers to name different tools each person might use. Mention that God told the men in today's Bible story which specific tools to take into battle. Encourage the boys and girls to listen for these items. Open the Bible to Judges and display the teaching picture as you share the Bible story.

GIDEON OBEYED GOD

—Based on Judges 6:11-14; 7:1-22

An angel appeared to a man named Gideon and said, "God is with you. Go and save your people from the Midianites (MID ih uhn ights)." Gideon did not think he was strong enough, but the angel told him, "God will be with you and give you the victory."

God told Gideon exactly what to do. He said to go with only three hundred men. The men went to drink water at the river. Some men bent down and drank right from the river. Some men cupped water in their hands and drank the water from their hands. God told Gideon to choose the men who drank water from their hands.

Each man was told to take a trumpet and a torch covered by a clay pitcher.

Gideon and his men surrounded the Midianites' camp. When Gideon gave the signal, the men blew their trumpets, smashed their pitchers, and shouted, "For the Lord and for Gideon!" The Midianites in the camp were confused by all the noise because it was late at night and very dark. They began to fight with one another and ran away.

Wrap Up

Review the Bible story. Say that God helped Gideon win the battle, just like He said He would. Display the teaching picture. Ask the children questions such as, "How many men did God want Gideon to take into battle? How did God tell Gideon to choose these men? What did God tell the men to bring?"

Learn the Bible verse and Life Point. Invite a child to open the Bible to Joshua 24:24 . Read Joshua 24:24. Guide the kids to repeat the verse. Say the Life Point: "People can choose to obey God." Comment that Gideon chose to do what God told him to do. Invite the boys and girls to repeat the Life Point together, making an O with their arms above their heads when they say "obey." Say that God allows people to make right and wrong choices.

Lead the preschoolers in prayer, asking God to help them obey.



BIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

ART

Allow preschoolers to glue cotton balls onto a paper plate in a river shape. Next, place a few drops of blue food coloring into a cup of water. Allow preschoolers to use an eyedropper to squirt the blue river color on the cotton balls, making their own river! Say, “Gideon obeyed God! (Child’s Name) can obey God too! Thank you, God, for the Bible! The Bible teaches us how to obey God.”

BLOCKS

Place blue butcher paper or a blue sheet in the block center, along with people figures and empty boxes as tents. Open the Bible and say, “Gideon obeyed God and blew a trumpet, and the men shouted, ‘For the Lord and for Gideon’. We can obey the Lord like Gideon!”

HOMELIVING

Preschoolers can serve each other water. Model how to pour into cups and share with a friend. Have a towel nearby and model cleaning up if needed. Allow preschoolers to do the rest. Set up a tent with a campfire. Say, “God helped Gideon to be a mighty man! Some of Gideon’s friends drank from the river, and some drank from their hands! Gideon listened to God! Thank you, God, for helping me obey you like Gideon!”

NATURE

A terebinth is a tree! The angel sat under a tree near Gideon while Gideon worked with the wheat! Wheat is what we use to make flour for bread and cake! Allow preschoolers to examine tree branches and scoop and pour flour in sensory bins. Say, “Thank you, God, for helping me make good choices. Gideon obeyed God, and (child’s name) can obey God too!”

PUZZLES & MANIPULATIVES

Allow preschoolers to use the sorting items to sort by color, animal, or shape. Model once or twice how to sort items into a bowl. Say, “God told Gideon which men to take and which men to leave! God knows everything about (child’s name). God knows how to help (child’s name)!”