

The BIBLE Story

Gideon

Judges 6–8

The Israelites were not very good at doing what God told them to do. God let their enemies from Midian rule over them for seven years. The Midianites were mean. They took Israel's food and animals.

The Israelites remembered how good life was when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to God, "Save us!"

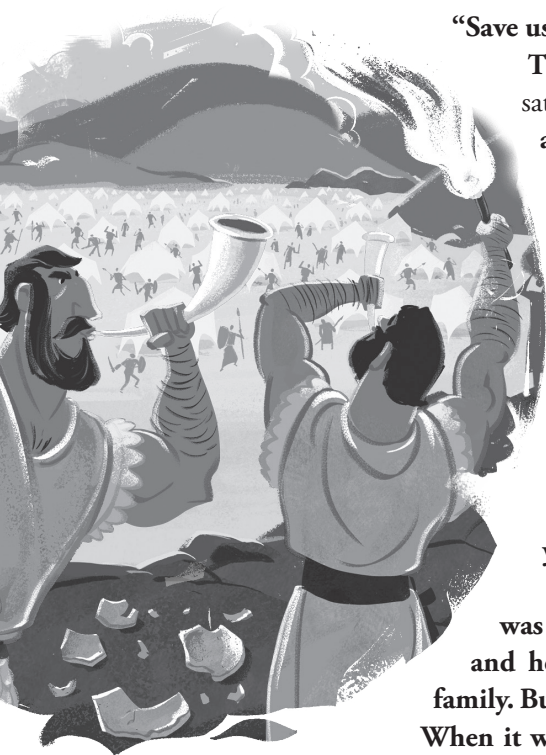
The angel of the LORD came and sat under an oak tree. The angel appeared to Gideon and said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior!"

Gideon was confused. "Please, my lord," Gideon said, "if the LORD is with us, why have all these bad things happened?"

The LORD said, "You will save the Israelites from the power of Midian. I am sending you, Gideon!"

Gideon was afraid. His family was the weakest family in his tribe, and he was the youngest son in the family. But God said, "I will be with you."

When it was time to go to battle, Gideon blew a ram's horn. Men lined up behind him, ready to fight. Gideon wanted a sign from God. "I will put fleece on the ground. If the fleece is wet with dew, but the ground is dry, I will believe that You will help me save Israel." That is exactly what happened. Again, Gideon



asked for a sign. This time, the fleece was dry and the ground was wet.

God told Gideon that he had too many men. He let anyone who was afraid to go to battle go home. Most of the people left. “There are still too many,” God said. God made a test for the people. All of them went to the river to drink the water. Anyone who knelt to drink water was sent home, but whoever lapped the water with his hand to his mouth stayed. Three hundred men remained.

That night, the army carried torches, blew their trumpets, and shattered the pitchers that were in their hands. The men ran toward the Midianite camp, shouting. Everyone in the Midianite army ran away.

The Israelites said to Gideon, “You saved us! Be our king.”

Gideon said. “God saved you. He will be your King.” When Gideon died, the Israelites again disobeyed God. They forgot what God had done for them.

Christ Connection: The people of Israel needed help. They asked God to help them. God used Gideon to help the people, and God fought for them. We need help too. We need God to save us from sin. We cannot save ourselves. God sent His Son, Jesus, to save us.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use your thumbs:** Encourage children to listen for the words *Israelites* and *Midianites* as you tell the Bible story. Direct them to put their thumbs up when they hear *Israelites* and put their thumbs down when they hear *Midianites*.
- **Sit under an oak tree:** If weather permits, lead preschoolers to sit under a tree, preferably an oak tree, while you tell the Bible story. Invite them to imagine the angel of the LORD sitting under the tree.