

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Be Courageous

SCRIPTURE: Judges 6–7

WORD OF WONDER: From 1 Chronicles 16:15

When I encounter big obstacles, fear is often my first response. I occupy myself imagining worst-case scenarios and shrinking back from the challenge before me. I once heard this saying: “Worry is like a rocking chair. It will give you something to do, but it won’t get you anywhere.”

After Joshua died, the Israelites forgot what God had done for them and did evil in His sight. God raised up judges to guide the people and point them back to Him. Gideon seemed an unlikely pick for this position of power and authority—he even doubted it himself—but God continued to work gently with the reluctant judge.

Read [Judges 6:11–16](#) and [7:1–8](#). Gideon was hiding when the Lord told him he would be a mighty warrior. After testing God several times, Gideon finally believed God was speaking to him. When Gideon did go into battle, the circumstances made it obvious that victory came from God alone.

- When have you felt inadequate for the task to which God is calling you?
- How have you seen God work through your inadequacy?
- How can you surrender your fear to God and deepen your dependence on Him today?

Gideon didn’t see himself as a “mighty warrior,” but as he trusted God, the Lord gave him boldness. When we put our faith in the Lord, God gives us courage.

Thank God for equipping us for His work and giving us boldness.

—**Suzanne Gosselin**

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Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The book of Judges takes its name from its leading men and women—the judges of ancient Israel. They were individuals through whom God overthrew foreign oppression and established godly leadership.

WHAT?

[Judges 6–7](#) tells the story of the judge named Gideon. When the Midianites were oppressing Israel, God sent Gideon to lead the Israelites in battle. Though Gideon was scared, God gave him courage. God helped him and just 300 soldiers defeat their oppressors.

WHERE?

The story takes place in Canaan, after Israel had occupied the land. The Midianites were oppressing the Israelites in their own land. Midian is the land where Moses lived for 40 years before God called him at the burning bush to deliver Israel from Egypt ([Exodus 3](#)).

WHEN?

The book of Judges is set after Joshua and the Israelites conquered Canaan and before Israel asked God for its first king, Saul. Several judges likely served at the same time in different parts of Israel. Gideon served around or after the time of Deborah.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God often fulfills His plans through unexpected people. He chose Gideon and David, even though they were the least important members of their families. Likewise, God raised up Jesus, Israel's Messiah, from the house of a carpenter in the backwater town of Nazareth.

Activity: Wet or Dry Cloth

SUPPLIES: washcloths (2), water, bowl, table

Just before the kids arrive, wet one washcloth so it's damp but not dripping, and put it in a bowl.

Welcome! I'm so glad you're here today! Hold up the dry washcloth. **Who knows what this is?** Allow kids to respond. **Right! This is a washcloth. Is this washcloth wet or dry?** Let the kids look at and feel the washcloth. Then repeat with the wet washcloth.

Let the kids feel the difference between wet and dry. They can use the wet washcloth to wipe a table in the room and the dry washcloth to dry it off. **We're going to talk about a time when God showed someone something amazing by getting a cloth wet and then making it dry! We'll find out all about it in today's part of God's big story.**

Activity: Be Courageous

Today we're learning about someone who was a regular person, and God called him to do something very brave. We'll learn how God showed the person that God would be with him. God helped the man, Gideon, be courageous! The word courageous means brave. It doesn't mean we never get scared. It means we trust that God is with us, even when we face scary things. I'll say some things, and if it makes you feel scared, you can hide your eyes like this (demonstrate hiding your eyes). **If God can help you be brave with what I say, put your hands on your hips and stand tall, showing courage.** Demonstrate standing tall.

Read the following list and encourage the kids to do the motions:

- A thunderstorm
- Going somewhere where you don't know anyone (like the first day of school)
- A spider
- Making a new friend
- Eating a new food
- A lion
- A big party
- A dark room
- Eating dinner
- Hearing from God

We can hear from God and let Him help us be brave and courageous, no matter what we face. God is always with us. We'll learn today how He helps us. Our Wonder Truth today is: **GOD HELPS US BE COURAGEOUS.**

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

GOD—*Point up.*

HELP US—*Point to yourself.*

BE COURAGEOUS—*Hands on your hips, standing tall.*

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, towels (2), bowl, water, Bible Story Picture [Option 1](#) and [Option 2](#) (optional)

Ahead of time, set out two towels. Fill a bowl with water and get one of the towels slightly wet.

Our God's big story today is a great story from the Bible about a person named Gideon. Can you say, "Gideon"? Pause to allow the kids to respond. We'll learn how God helped him be brave. Let's find out from the Bible what happened.

Use the script provided below. Print the Bible Story Picture [Option 1](#) and [Option 2](#) to give the kids a visual depiction of the story.

BIBLE STORY SCRIPT: Gideon was not very brave. But God was ready to help Gideon be courageous. Gideon said he would put out a sheepskin cloth overnight. If it was wet with dew in the morning, but the ground around it was dry, Gideon would know God would be with him. Dew is water that forms on something from the air. Have you noticed the grass is wet in the morning sometimes? That's dew.

Let's pretend to go to sleep. Encourage kids to lie down and pretend to be asleep. **While Gideon slept, something amazing happened! Let's wake up and see. In the morning, the ground was dry, but the sheepskin was wet.** Hold up the wet towel. Let the kids feel it.

Gideon asked for one more sign. This time he wanted the sheepskin to be dry, but the ground around it to be wet with dew. So to bed they went once again! Let's go to sleep again!

Encourage kids to lie down and pretend to be asleep.

Time to wake up! Sure enough, when he woke up the next day, the ground was wet, and the sheepskin was dry. Let the kids feel the dry towel. **God helped Gideon be courageous. We can trust God too. God can help us be courageous.**

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, Problems and Promises Word of Wonder [Slide](#)

WORD OF WONDER

God keeps His promises forever.

—from 1 Chronicles 16:15

Display the Word of Wonder [Slide](#) or [Video](#), if using. **Our Word of Wonder for the Problems and Promises series is from 1 Chronicles 16:15: “God keeps His promises forever.”**

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **GOD**—*Point up.*
- **KEEPS**—*Spread your right hand out before you from left to right.*
- **HIS PROMISES**—*Place an index finger on your lips. Move your hand downward and open your palm.*
- **FOREVER.**—*Draw large circles in the air with your index finger.*
- **FROM 1 CHRONICLES 16:15**—*Open your hands in front of you, like opening a book.*

Prayer and Blessing

Let's pray and thank God for how He guides us and how He keeps His promises. When I say, "brave," make a brave face.

God, thank You for helping Gideon be brave (make brave face). Thank You for helping us be brave (make brave face) and courageous! We trust You to always be with us and help us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: As you go out today, may you always remember that God will help you be courageous. When you're feeling scared or alone, God will always be with you and will help you be brave.

BONUS Activity: Cotton Ball Sheepskin

SUPPLIES: cotton balls (at least 3 per kid), bowl (optional), water (optional)

Show the kids the cotton balls.

These cotton balls remind me of the sheepskin fleece that Gideon used in God's big story. Do you remember what Gideon asked God to do with the sheepskin? Allow kids time to respond. Right, he asked God to keep it dry when the ground around it was wet and to make it wet when the ground all around it was dry! This helped Gideon be courageous! Let's play with the cotton balls and pretend we're picking up the sheepskin from the ground, like Gideon did.

Toss the cotton balls on the floor and encourage the kids to pick them up. To make it even more fun you could let the kids get some of the cotton balls wet (like what Gideon saw in the story) by dropping them into a bowl of water.