

## Lesson 2

# Gideon Trusted God

### Judges 6

#### Memory Verse

“The Lord said to him [Gideon], Surely I will be with you...”  
(Judges 6:16)

#### Teacher’s Objective

*At the end of the session, the students should be able to:*

**Define** who the Midianite people were

**Locate** on a map the Jordan River and the Sinai Peninsula

**Describe** how Gideon was a man of faith and how God chose him to do an important work

**Express** in their own words what God tells us to do and how they will trust God for His help

#### Materials Needed

See “Teaching Activities” for specific activities

## Teacher’s Bible Study

The Israelites were victorious in conquering much of the Promised Land. However, they never conquered all of it. They eventually settled among the Canaanites and took in many of their heathen ways. Over the years, they turned away from God. By the time of Judges, the nation was far removed from God. Far removed from pleasing Him. Along the way, God did raise up one man or woman to lead the nation as a judge. One such man was Gideon.

Gideon was the judge of Israel who defeated the Midianites, one of Israel’s greatest enemies at that time. The name Gideon means “warrior.” Gideon was the son of Joash the Abiezrite, of the tribe of Manasseh.

This week’s story is about how Gideon received reassuring signs from God and then trusted and obeyed God. “Reviewing the story of Gideon’s life,” wrote Dr. Robert A. Watson, the leisurely Victorian commentator, “we find this clear lesson, that within certain limits, he who trusts and obeys God has a quite irresistible efficiency.” This was Gideon’s lesson for Israel. “Yet,” Dr. Watson continues, “seriously limited as he was, Gideon, when he had once laid hold of the fact that he was called by the unseen God to deliver Israel, went on step by step to the great victory which made the tribes free.” Gideon gave the land peace for forty years until his death.

The Midianites were wealthy nomads who lived east of the Jordan River and down into the Sinai Peninsula (Exodus 2:15–21; 18:1–11). Midian is the fourth son of Abraham and his second wife, Keturah (Genesis 25:1,2).

In the Bible, five times there appears a connection with the Midianites. During the time of Joseph, it was hard to define the difference between the Midianites and the Ishmaelites. In Judges 8:24, it seems the Midianites were called Ishmaelites. During the early life of Moses, he married the daughter Zipporah. Her father was Jethro, the priest of Midian. During Balaam’s time, Moab and Midian worked together against Israel. Now with Gideon the Midianites are not seen as a large army or a powerful nation. They are bullies. They are a mob of people. They are the first people to use camels on a large scale. This use of the camel enabled them to increase their desert mobility. They are described in the Scriptures “like locusts” because they would wait till the harvest was ripe and then come in and destroy it and leave no sustenance for the people of Israel.

In preparation of this week’s lesson, read Judges 2:16 through 4:24 and Psalm 31.

## Presenting the Bible Story

Trumpets of Gideon's day were called *shopbars*, which means "horns." The *shopbar* was usually made from an animal's horn that was curved in shape. The sound that came from them was usually shrill with only two or three different notes

**Judges 6:1–6**

**Judges 6:7–10**

**Judges 6:11–13**

A winepress is a large pit or trough. Grapes are put in the winepress and workers would press out the juice

**Judges 6:14–16**

**Judges 6:17–21**

**Judges 6:22–24**

**Judges 6:25–27**

*Baal* was the name of many gods worshiped by the people of Canaan. The Baal gods ruled all facets of their lives, their land, crops, and animals

**Judges 6:28–35**

**Judges 6:36–40**

*Fleece* is the wool

In the days of Gideon, the Israelites were under oppression by the hands of the Midianites for seven years. This seven years of oppression was sandwiched in between two 40-year periods of peace (Judges 5:31; 8:28). During this time the Israelites were not listening to God. Instead, they were worshiping pagan gods. The Midianites were attacking seasonally. This means they would wait until it was harvest time.

It wasn't until the Lord sent a prophet that the Israelites were aware of why they had an enemy such as the Midianites oppressing them. The prophet that God sent was an unnamed one.

Gideon now has a confrontation with the Angel of the Lord. Two things are evident by Gideon threshing his wheat in a winepress. His harvest was small (usually wheat was threshed in a large open area on a threshing floor), and he was fearful of being discovered by the Midianites; therefore he was hiding in the winepress.

Since the people of Israel were in such a state of oppression, Gideon questioned God's promise.

Gideon was obviously a realist, or better yet, a skeptic. Gideon did not believe himself to be a mighty warrior. "My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." Introduce memory verse.

Gideon then asked God for a sign. Some have questioned how this could be an act of faith—to question God. In Israel, a prophet that was to speak for God should and could be tested (Deuteronomy 18:18–22). Gideon is listed, as well, among the heroes of faith (Hebrews 11:32).

When Gideon realized that this was the Angel of the Lord, he became fearful of death (Exodus 33:20). This is why, when the Lord told Gideon he was not going to die, Gideon built an altar to the Lord and named it "The Lord is Peace."

Now God gives Gideon a test of obedience. Gideon was not only to have military victory over the enemy, but he was to tear down the reason God gave His people over to the Midianites. God punished the Israelites for worshiping this idol by having the Midianites oppress them. Just because Gideon removed the altar at night with ten servants it does not minimize his obedience to God. It is not likely that Gideon would have gotten away with this during the day.

Joash, Gideon's father, gave wise advice to the men of the city when it was found out that Gideon was the one who destroyed Baal. Let Baal, if it really is a god, defend himself. Gideon was then called *Jerub-Baal*, which means "Let Baal contend." God's Spirit came upon Gideon and the tribes in the area were gathered together to go fight

Gideon needs reassurance once again from God. He asked God for a sign. Notice that Gideon didn't ask God what the mission was. Gideon knew what God wanted him to do; he just wanted to be sure God was

with him.

God was gracious to Gideon and granted him his sign, just as God is gracious to us. When you have a difficult task and ask God for help, go in faith, humbly seeking His assurance.

## Art and Activities

## Teaching Activities

### Young Children

Provide a copy of the Activity Page suitable for each of your students. They will need pencils and crayons as well.

### Older Children

Provide copies of the Activity Page suitable for each of your students. **Explore the Subject**

**Explore the following questions with your students:**

1. When Israel cried out to God for help, did they show a repentant attitude? Or was it not till God sent a prophet to point out their sin? (Judges 6:7–10).

2. Was Gideon a mighty warrior? Does this tell you that with God's Holy Spirit, even the least among us can do great things for God?

3. What are some lessons we can learn from Gideon that can apply to our life today? (Examples: humble and insignificant people can have a place in God's plan; obeying God in the small things can help when more difficult things come our way; when God is on your side what is there to fear?)

**Always close your class with prayer**

## Respond and Reinforce

1. As children, can you do God's work? (Yes. Obey your parents, keep the Sabbath and the holy days, show love to others. Do those things that please our Creator).

2. What does *trust* mean?

3. Who did the people of Israel trust? (Their idols.)

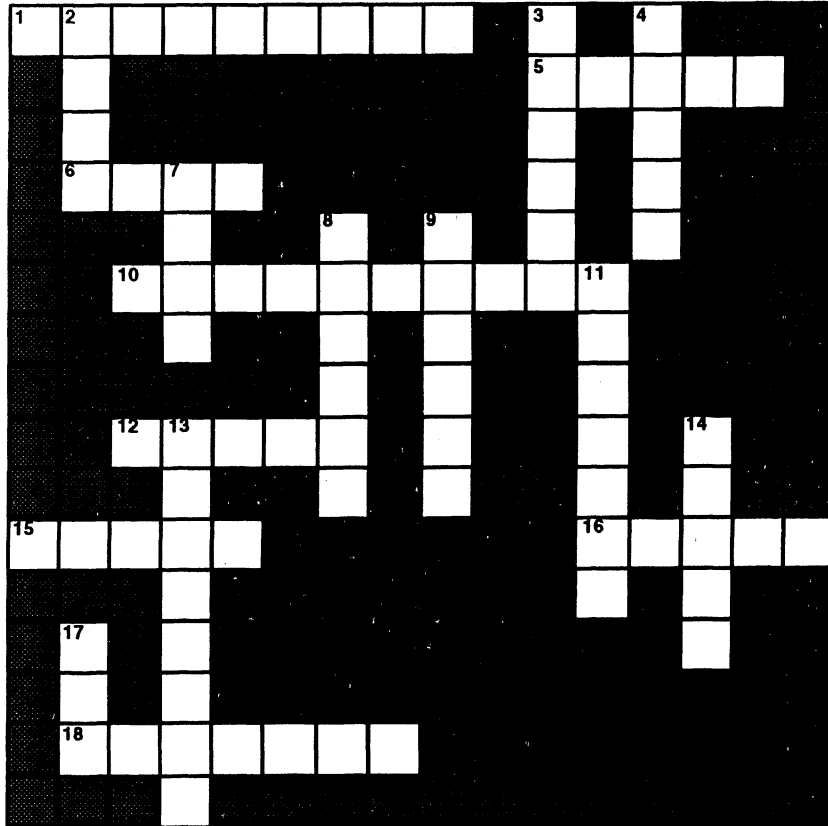
4. What can an idol do? (Absolutely nothing.)

5. Discuss the memory verse.

# Activity

## Gideon Trusted God Judges 6

Read the scriptures to familiarize yourself with the story of Gideon.  
Then complete the crossword puzzle below.



### Across

1. Gideon threshed his wheat by the \_\_\_\_\_ (Judges 6:11).
5. "I am the \_\_\_\_\_ in my father's house" (Judges 6:15).
6. An angel of the \_\_\_\_\_ appeared to Gideon.
10. These people oppressed the children of Israel (Judges 6:2).
12. A small wood without undergrowth.
15. Idol worshiper; worshipper of heathen gods.
16. Opposite of day.
18. A person experienced in warfare.

### Down

2. An image or object that is worshiped as a deity.
3. The coat of wool that covers a sheep.
4. Cud-chewing mammal used as a pack or draft animal in the desert.
7. To make a sudden surprise attack.
8. A person who operates a farm.
9. Son of Joash (Judges 6:11).
11. A person working in the service of another.
13. To restore to assurance or confidence.
14. An attendant of God.
17. Moisture condensed from the air at night and deposited on cooled surfaces in small drops.

## Activity

### Gideon Trusted God Judges 6

Read the scriptures that tell of the story of Gideon. Then find the words hidden in the word search puzzle below. The words may run up, down, diagonally, or across.



GIDEON	CAMELS	THRESH	HERO	SERVANT
WARRIOR	ANGEL	WHEAT	TESTED	IDOLS
JOASH	OPPRESS	WINEPRESS	OBEY	DEW
MANASSEH	PAGAN	FEARFUL	ALTAR	BOWL
MIDIANITES	GROVES	SIGN	FAITH	REASSURE
NOMAD	BAAL	FLEECE	NIGHT	HARVEST

**Activity**

**Gideon Trusted God**  
**Judges 6**

God reassures Gideon. Color the picture of Gideon and the wet fleece.



# Activity

## Will You Work For God?

God teaches us to love, help, and serve each other. In these things we do God's work.  
Fill in the words using the vowels.

Fill in the vowels.

△ = E    ▭ = O    ◇ = A    □ = I    ○ = U

S \_ \_ R V \_ \_  
△                      △

G \_ \_ D \_ \_ N D  
▭                      ◇

\_ \_ N \_ \_  
▭                      △

\_ \_ N \_ \_ T H \_ \_ R .  
◇                      ▭                      △

