

GIDEON



Read Judges 6:12-16 and complete the activities below.

Start Reading Here

JUDGES 6

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Our people of long ago told us about them. They said, 'Didn't the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has deserted us. He has handed us over to Midian."

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MONDAY

The angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon. He said, "Mighty warrior, the LORD is with you" (Judges 6:12).

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: Judges 6:12-16

I WANT TO SEE WHAT GOD SEES IN ME

Gideon was little and weak. He was the youngest in his family. Gideon looked at those who were bigger and felt small. He looked at those who were stronger and felt weak. He didn't feel important or mighty.

But God didn't see Gideon as small and weak. God saw what Gideon could become. He called Gideon a mighty warrior. And God was right. God helped Gideon become a mighty warrior.

God knows you. He knows how little you may feel. He knows what you can and cannot do. You may look down on yourself. But God doesn't. God doesn't compare you to others. God sees how great you can become. Ask God to show you how he sees you. Then watch how God will make you great.

ASK YOURSELF

When do you feel little and weak? Do you believe that God sees the great person you will grow up to be? How does that make you feel?

I have read this devotion.

For your next reading, turn to page 302. If you want to read more, see Psalm 139:14-16 on page 740.

End
Reading
Here

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JUDGES 6

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The LORD said, “I will wait until you return.”

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²⁴ So Gideon built an altar there to honor the LORD. He called it The LORD Is Peace. It still stands in Ophrah to this day. Ophrah is in the territory that belongs to the family line of Abiezer.

²⁵ That same night the LORD spoke to Gideon. He said, “Get the second bull from your father’s herd. Get the one that is seven years old. Tear down the altar your father built to honor the god named Baal. Cut down the pole beside it. The pole is used to worship the female god named Asherah. ²⁶ Then build the right kind of altar. Build it to honor the LORD your God. Build it on top of this hill. Then use the wood from the Asherah pole you cut down. Sacrifice the second bull as a burnt offering.”

²⁷ So Gideon went and got ten of his servants. He did just as the LORD had told him. But he was afraid of his family. He was also afraid of the people in the town. So he did everything at night instead of during the day.

²⁸ In the morning the people in the town got up. They saw that Baal’s altar had been torn down. The Asherah pole beside it had been cut down. And the second bull had been sacrificed on the new altar that had been built.

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They looked into the matter carefully. Someone told them, “Gideon, the son of Joash, did it.”

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³³ All the Midianites and Amalekites gathered their armies together. Other tribes from the east joined them. All of them went across the Jordan River. They camped in the Valley of Jezreel. ³⁴ Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Gideon. So Gideon blew a trumpet to send for the men of Abiezer. He told them to follow him. ³⁵ He sent messengers all through Manasseh’s territory. He called for the men of Manasseh to fight. He also sent messengers to the men of Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali. So all those men went up to join the others.

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³⁸ And that’s what happened. Gideon got up early the next day. He squeezed the dew out of the wool. The water filled a bowl.

³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, “Don’t be

Read Judges 6:12 and complete the activities on the next page.

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JUDGES 5

23 'Let Meroz be cursed,' said the angel of the LORD.
'Let bitter curses fall on its people.
They did not come to help the LORD.
They did not come to help him against our powerful enemies.'

24 "May Jael be the most blessed woman of all.
May the wife of Heber, the Kenite, be blessed.
May she be the most blessed woman of all those who live in tents.

25 Sisera asked for water. She gave him milk.
In a bowl fit for nobles she brought him buttermilk.

26 Her hand reached out for a tent stake.
Her right hand reached for a hammer.
She hit Sisera. She crushed his head.
She drove the stake right through his head.

27 He sank down. He fell at her feet.
He was lying there.
At her feet he sank down. He fell.
He fell where he sank down.
That's where he died.

28 "Sisera's mother looked out through the window.
From behind the wooden screen she cried out.
'Why is his chariot taking so long to get here?' she said.
'Why can't I hear the noise of his chariots yet?'

29 Her wisest ladies answer her.
And here's what she keeps saying to herself.

30 She says, 'They must be finding riches to bring back.
They must be dividing them up.
Each man is getting a woman or two.
They are giving colorful clothes to Sisera.
The clothes are very beautiful.
He will bring some for me to wear.
The men must be finding many things to bring home.'

31 "LORD, may all your enemies be destroyed.
But may all who love you be like the morning sun.
May they be like the sun when it shines the brightest."
So the land was at peace for 40 years.

GIDEON

6 The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. So for seven years he handed them over to the people of Midian. ²The Midianites treated the Israelites very badly. That's why they made hiding places for themselves. They hid in holes in the mountains. They also hid in caves and in other safe places. ³Each year the people planted their crops. When they did, the Midianites came into the country and attacked it. So did the Amalekites and other tribes from the east. ⁴They camped on the land. They destroyed the crops all the way to Gaza. They didn't spare any living thing for Israel. They didn't spare sheep or cattle or donkeys. ⁵The Midianites came up with their livestock and tents. They came like huge numbers of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels. They came into the land to destroy it. ⁶The Midianites made the Israelites very poor. So they cried out to the LORD for help.

⁷They cried out to the LORD because of what the Midianites had done. ⁸So he sent a prophet to Israel. The prophet said, "The LORD is the God of Israel. He says, 'I brought you up out of Egypt. That is the land where you were slaves. ⁹I saved you from the power of the Egyptians. I saved you from all those who were treating you badly. I drove out the Canaanites to make room for you. I gave you their land. ¹⁰I said to you, "I am the LORD your God. You are now living in the land of the Amorites. Do not worship their gods." But you have not listened to me.'"

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Read
This
Verse

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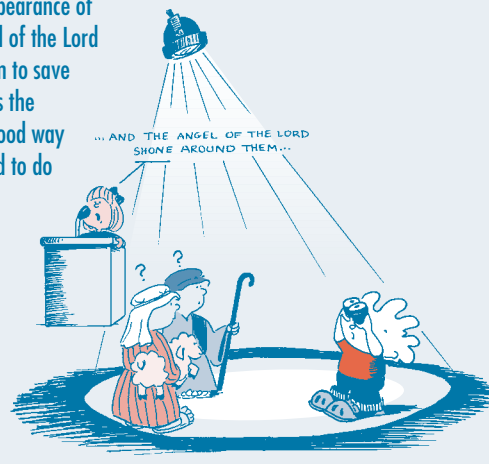
KIDS' QUESTION

WHO WAS THE ANGEL OF THE LORD?

The Bible mentions the angel of the Lord many times. In the desert, Moses saw a bush that was burning but was not burning up. Then the angel of the Lord, a special appearance of God, spoke to him out of it. The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, too, and told him to save Israel from the Midianites. Sometimes the phrase "angel of the Lord" is just a good way to describe an angel coming from God to do God's work.

CHECKOUT Judges 6:12

Related verses:
2 Samuel 24:16;
1 Chronicles 21:16



Read Judges 7:1-21 and complete the activities below.

Start
Reading
Here

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Judges 7

Gideon Wins the Battle Over the Midianites

7 Early in the morning Jerub-Baal and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. Jerub-Baal was another name for Gideon. The camp of Midian was north of Gideon's camp. It was in the valley near the hill of Moreh. **2** The LORD said to Gideon, "I want to hand Midian over to you. But you have too many men for me to do that. Then Israel might brag, 'My own strength has saved me.' **3** So here is what I want you to announce to the army. Tell them, 'Those who tremble with fear can turn back. They can leave Mount Gilead.'" So 22,000 men left. But 10,000 remained.

4 The LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. So take them down to the water. There I will reduce the number of them for you. If I say, 'This one will go with you,' he will go. But if I say, 'That one will not go with you,' he will not go."

5 So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD said to him, "Some men will drink the way dogs do. They will lap up the water with their tongues. Separate them from those who get down on their knees to drink." **6** Three hundred men brought up the water to their mouths with their hands. And they lapped it up the way dogs do. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

7 The LORD spoke to Gideon. He said, "With the help of the 300 men who lapped up the water I will save you. I will hand the Midianites over to you. Let all

the other men go home." **8** So Gideon sent those Israelites home. But he kept the 300 men. They took over the supplies and trumpets the others had left.

The Midianites had set up their camp in the valley below where Gideon was. **9** During that night the LORD said to Gideon, "Get up. Go down against the camp. I am going to hand it over to you. **10** But what if you are afraid to attack? Then go down to the camp with your servant Purah. **11** Listen to what they are saying. After that, you will not be afraid to attack the camp." So Gideon and his servant Purah went down to the edge of the camp. **12** The Midianites had set up their camp in the valley. So had the Amalekites and all the other tribes from the east. There were so many of them that they looked like huge numbers of locusts. Like the grains of sand on the seashore, their camels couldn't be counted.

13 Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a friend about his dream. "I had a dream," he was saying. "A round loaf of barley bread came rolling into the camp of Midian. It hit a tent with great force. The tent turned over and fell down flat."

14 His friend replied, "That can only be the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash. Gideon is from Israel. God has handed the Midianites over to him. He has given him the whole camp."

15 Gideon heard the man explain what the dream meant. Then Gideon bowed down and worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel. He called out, "Get up! The LORD has handed the Midianites

Scared, but Willing

Gideon was the leader of God's army. He had many soldiers. But God told him he would conquer his enemy with just 300 men. Gideon was afraid, but he trusted God. So he told his men to do what God had told him to do. His men followed his example. They stood around the camp of the enemy and made lots of noise. The enemy ran away in fear.

Are there people who are good examples for you? People who help you trust God? Tell them so. Then try to be like them as you grow up.

Live It!

JUDGES 7:1-21



Judges 7—8

300

over to you.”¹⁶ Gideon separated the 300 men into three fighting groups. He put a trumpet and an empty jar into the hands of each man. And he put a torch inside each jar.

¹⁷ “Watch me,” he told them. “Do what I do. I’ll go to the edge of the enemy camp. Then do exactly as I do. ¹⁸ I and everyone with me will blow our trumpets. Then blow your trumpets from your positions all around the camp. And shout the battle cry, ‘For the LORD and for Gideon!’”

¹⁹ Gideon and the 100 men with him reached the edge of the enemy camp. It was about ten o’clock at night. It was just after the guard had been changed. Gideon and his men blew their trumpets. They broke the jars that were in their hands. ²⁰ The three fighting groups blew their trumpets. They smashed their jars. They held their torches in their left hands. They held in their right hands the trumpets they were going to blow. Then they shouted the battle cry, “A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!” ²¹ Each man stayed in his position around the camp. But all the Midianites ran away in fear. They were crying out as they ran.

²² When the 300 trumpets were blown, the LORD caused all the men in the enemy camp to start fighting one another. They attacked one another with their swords. The army ran away to Beth Shittah toward Zererah. They ran all the way to the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath. ²³ Israelites from the tribes of Naphtali, Asher and all of Manasseh were called out. They chased the Midianites. ²⁴ Gideon sent messengers through the entire hill country of Ephraim. They said, “Come on down against the Midianites. Take control of the waters of the Jordan River before they get there. Do it all the way to Beth Barah.”

So all the men of Ephraim were called out. They took control of the waters of the Jordan all the way to Beth Barah. ²⁵ They also captured Oreb and Zeeb. Those men were two of the Midianite leaders. The men of Ephraim killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb. They killed Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. They chased the Midianites. And they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon. He was by the Jordan River.

Zebah and Zalmunna

8 The men of Ephraim asked Gideon, “Why have you treated us like this? Why didn’t you ask us to help you when you went out to fight against Midian?” In anger they challenged Gideon.

² But he answered them, “What I’ve done isn’t anything compared to what you have done. Ephraim’s grapes have been gathered. Isn’t what is left over better than all the grapes that have been gathered from Abiezer’s vines? ³ God handed Oreb and Zeeb over to you. They were Midianite leaders. So what was I able to do compared to what you did?” After Gideon had said that, they didn’t feel angry with him anymore.

⁴ Gideon and his 300 men were very tired. But they kept on chasing their enemies. They came to the Jordan River and went across it. ⁵ Gideon said to the men of Sukkoth, “Give my troops some bread. They are worn out. And I’m still chasing Zebah and Zalmunna. They are the kings of Midian.”

⁶ But the officials of Sukkoth objected. They said, “Have you already killed Zebah and Zalmunna? Have you cut their hands off and brought them back to prove it? If you haven’t, why should we give bread to your troops?”

⁷ Gideon replied, “The LORD will hand Zebah and Zalmunna over to me. When he does, I’ll tear your skin with thorns from desert bushes.”

⁸ From there Gideon went up to Peniel. He asked its men for the same thing. But they answered as the men of Sukkoth had. ⁹ So he said to the men of Peniel, “I’ll be back after I’ve won the battle. Then I’ll tear down this tower.”

¹⁰ Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor. They had an army of about 15,000 men. That’s all that were left of the armies of the tribes from the east. About 120,000 men who carried swords had died in battle. ¹¹ Gideon went up the trail the people of the desert had made. It ran east of Nobah and Jogbehah. He attacked the army by surprise. ¹² Zebah and Zalmunna ran away. They were the two kings of Midian. Gideon chased them and captured them. He destroyed their whole army.

¹³ Then Gideon, the son of Joash, returned from the battle. He came back through the Pass of Heres. ¹⁴ He

End
Reading
Here

Read Judges 6:14-16; 7:3-7 and complete the activities on page 8.

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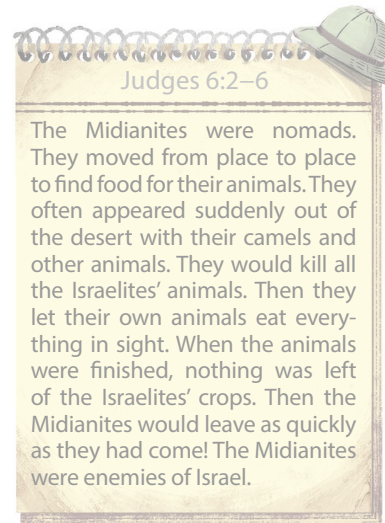
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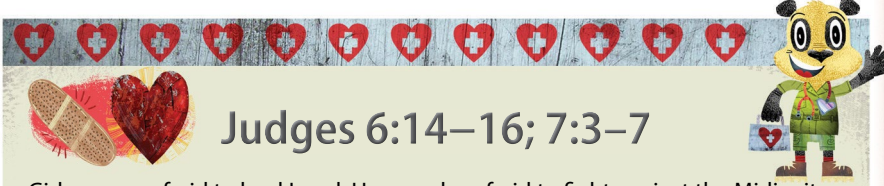
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Judges 6:14–16; 7:3–7

Gideon was afraid to lead Israel. He was also afraid to fight against the Midianites. But the Lord sent Gideon anyway. The Lord promised he would be with Gideon. So Gideon gathered 32,000 men. Read Judges 7:3. **Hearty** wonders how those men made Gideon feel?

However, the Lord sent nearly all of them home. He only allowed 300 to stay. How do you think Gideon felt then?

The Lord would show Gideon that he and his 300 men could defeat the Midianites. How? The Lord would help them. How do you think Gideon felt knowing the Lord would be with him?

JUDGES 6:35 | 321

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Gideon Wins the Battle Over the Midianites

7 Early in the morning Jerub-Baal and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. Jerub-Baal was another name for Gideon. The camp of Midian was north of Gideon’s camp. It was in the valley near the hill of Moreh. ²The LORD said to Gideon, “I want to hand Midian over to you. But you have too many men for me to do that. Then Israel might brag, ‘My own strength has saved me.’ ³So here is what I want you to announce to the army. Tell them, ‘Those who tremble with fear can turn back. They can leave Mount Gilead.’” So 22,000 men left. But 10,000 remained.

⁴The LORD said to Gideon, “There are still too many men. So take them down to the water. There I will reduce the number of them for you. If I say, ‘This one will go with you,’ he will go. But if I say, ‘That one will not go with you,’ he will not go.”

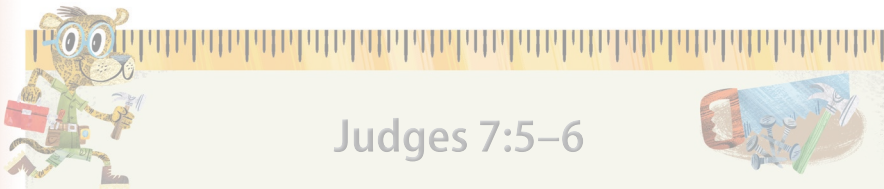
⁵So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD said to him, “Some men will drink the way dogs do. They will lap up the water with their tongues. Separate them from those who get down on their knees to drink.” ⁶Three hundred men brought up the water to their mouths with their hands. And they lapped it up the way dogs do. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

⁷The LORD spoke to Gideon. He said, “With the help of the 300 men who lapped up the water I will save you. I will hand the Midianites over to you. Let all the other men go home.” ⁸So Gideon sent those Israelites home. But he kept the 300 men. They took over the supplies and trumpets the others had left.

The Midianites had set up their camp in the valley below where Gideon was. ⁹During that night the LORD said to Gideon, “Get up. Go down against the camp. I am going to hand it over to you. ¹⁰But what if you are afraid to attack? Then go down to the camp with your servant Purah. ¹¹Listen to what they are saying. After that, you will not be afraid to attack the camp.” So Gideon and his servant Purah went down to the edge of the camp. ¹²The Midianites had set up their camp in the valley. So had the Amalekites and all the other tribes from the east. There were so many of them that they looked like huge numbers of locusts. Like the grains of sand on the seashore, their camels couldn’t be counted.

Start Reading Here

End Reading Here



Judges 7:5–6

Gideon had to watch his men drink water.
Some brought the water to their mouths with their hands.
Others got down on their knees to drink and lapped it the way dogs do.
Crafty wonders how you would have drunk the water. Go and try it out.
Which way is easier for you?
Would you have gone home or would you have stayed for the battle?