

Bible background

Judges 7

Aim of lesson

To see the goodness of God and feel thankful to him.

Preparation required

For a bright collage, collect: black paper or cloth; silver foil; scraps of brown paper; orange and yellow paints or paper; activity sheet with large letters to colour 'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'.

Arrange the coloured letters on the black paper, with scattered shapes of simple silver trumpets and swords, broken fragments of pottery and brilliant flames.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Help the children to appreciate the normal impossibility of a large army (like 'locusts') being beaten, unless outmatched by greater numbers or superior weapons.
2. Ask them if they can guess why God reduced Gideon's army to only 300 men. Once, the people had trusted in Baal, who never did anything for them at all (he couldn't, could he?) Now God wanted them to trust in him, the worker of miracles.
3. The children will be amused by the Midianite's dream; highlight God's goodness again in that he deliberately intended Gideon should overhear this conversation and be encouraged. Yet again Gideon was moved to be thankful.
4. Gideon's plan worked well, but mainly because it was God who made sure of the resulting confusion, 'setting every man's sword against his companion'. Highlight the drama: tremendous noise of trumpets, shouting and smashing of earthenware, and sudden bright flames from torches hitherto hidden in the jars.

Alternative activities

1. If you have space, make some tents and have some children pretend to be Midianites talking about their dream. Others can be Gideon and his soldiers. Split them into groups to 'ambush' the camp.
2. Make some cardboard tube trumpets. Torches can be made from rolled brown card/paper sticks with tissue paper flames.

Relevance to the children's lives

Ask the children to think of all the things God has done for them, or given to them. Discuss the need for thanksgiving at all times, and the extent to which we can trust in God to be good to us.

Prayer

Praise God for his power and love and thank him for all good things.

Verse

'But I trust in you. O Lord; I say, "You are my God."' Psalm 31:14.