

THE STORY

When the Israelites had been living in the Promised land for some time, they began worshipping other gods. For seven years God allowed the Midianites to invade the land at harvest time. The Midianites would ruin the crops and not leave any livestock for the Israelites, until they were so poor that they cried out to God for help.

God chose an ordinary farmer called Gideon to form an army. So that the people would know that it was God who won the victory, God told Gideon, "You have too many men." So Gideon sent home all those men who were afraid to fight, but he still had too many men. God told him, "Take the men to the water to drink. Keep only those men who drink out of their hands." Gideon did what God said.

"With these 300 men I will deliver the Midianites into your hands," God told him. "Go down to the camp and listen to what the Midianites are saying about you." So that night Gideon crept down and heard that the Midianite camp was afraid and believed that the sword of Gideon would defeat them.

Gideon returned to the Israelite camp and called out, "The LORD has given the Midianite camp into our hands." Then he divided the men into three groups and placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them with torches inside. "Follow me," Gideon said, "and do exactly as I do. When I and my group blow our trumpets, then all of you blow yours, and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!'"

The men followed Gideon to the Midianite camp, and at the sign, blew their trumpets, and broke the jars. Holding up the torches, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"

The Midianite army were surprised and confused and began fighting one another. They all fled. God had indeed won a great victory through Gideon.

FAITH AND FAMILY TIME

- Display the story picture. Read more about the story of Gideon in Judges 6,7 or in a Bible story book.
- Talk about blessings your family enjoys (house, food, friends, etc.) and how these are gifts from God, not things we have earned or deserved.
- Discuss how children can react to dangerous situations and to people who threaten or bully them. Parents relate their own experiences and talk about trusting God rather than their own strength.
- Have a Bible knowledge game, reciting passages that tell of God's promises to care for us.
- Choose a person or a family who needs help. Pray for God's care for them. As a family, do something to help them.



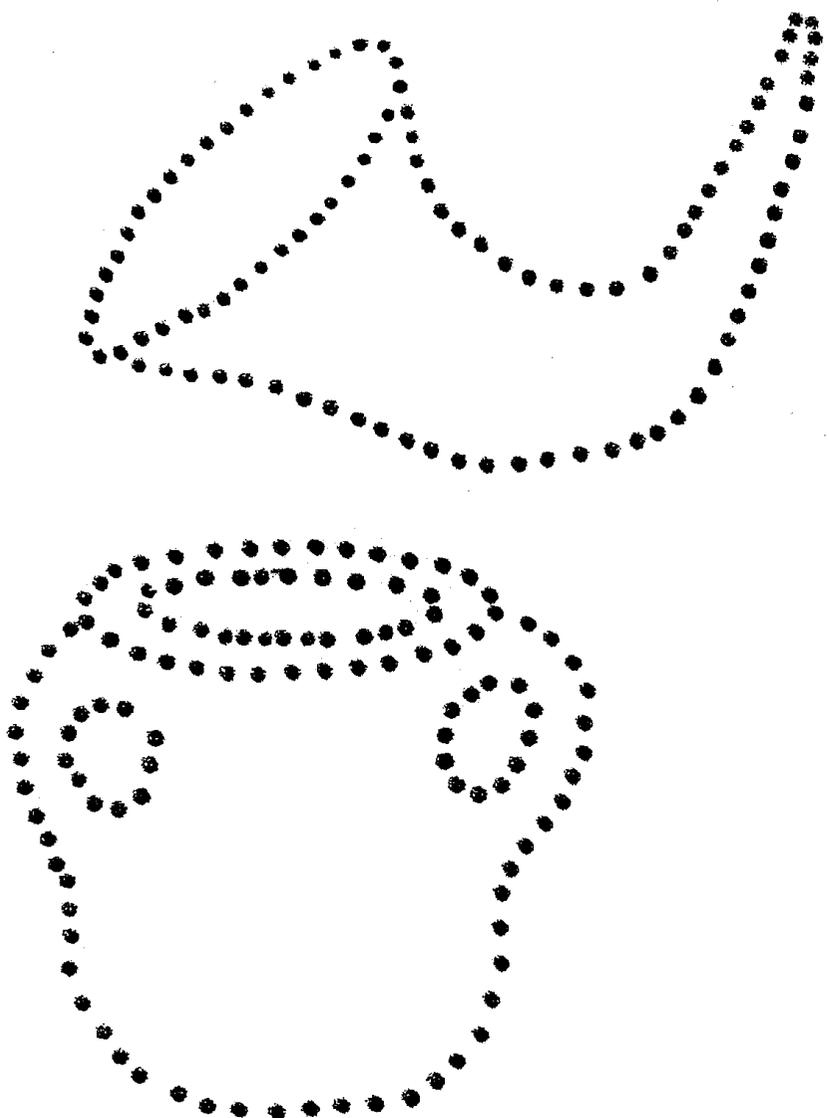
PRAYER

Dear God, we are weak, but You are strong. We get frightened by enemies and things that can hurt us, but You protect us from harm and danger. Be our strength when we have hard things to do. Be a shield for us when we are in danger. Thank You for helping us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

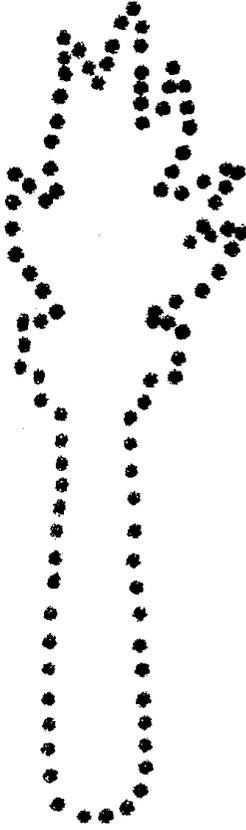


GIDEON'S VICTORY

Judges 6,7



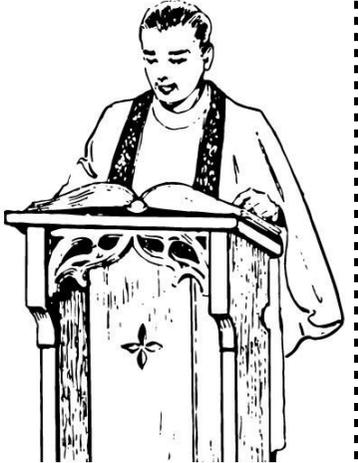
Trace over the dots to see what God told Gideon and his army to use for the battle.



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Our Pastor

Our Pastor is like Gideon. God chose our pastor to lead us. Pastors lead us to Jesus and show us how strong and good and wise Jesus is. Our pastor teaches us that Jesus loves us and forgives us when we do wrong. Our pastor teaches us that Jesus also helps us when people hurt us and when bad things happen to us.



Bible Verse
God is for us.
 Romans 8:31

Because God is for us,
 He loves us.
 He helps us.
 He does things for us.

Responsive prayer

Leader:

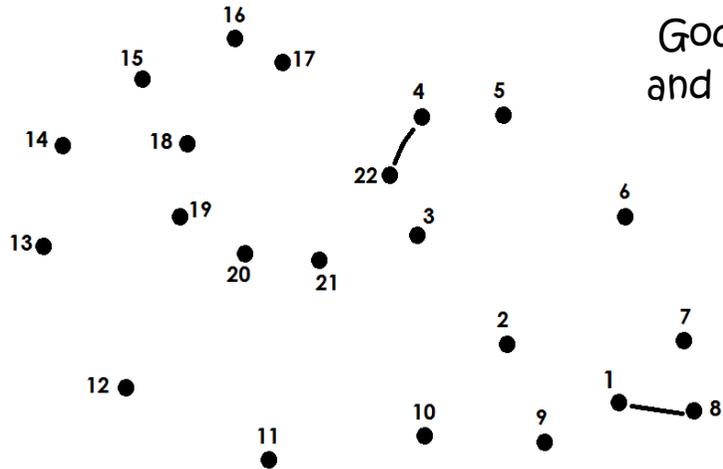
Children:

The Bible tells us that..... God is for us.
 Jesus, You showed us that..... God is for us.
 Help us to be strong because..... God is for us.
 Help us to show others that..... God is for us.
 All: Amen.

God was with Gideon and helped him to save the people.



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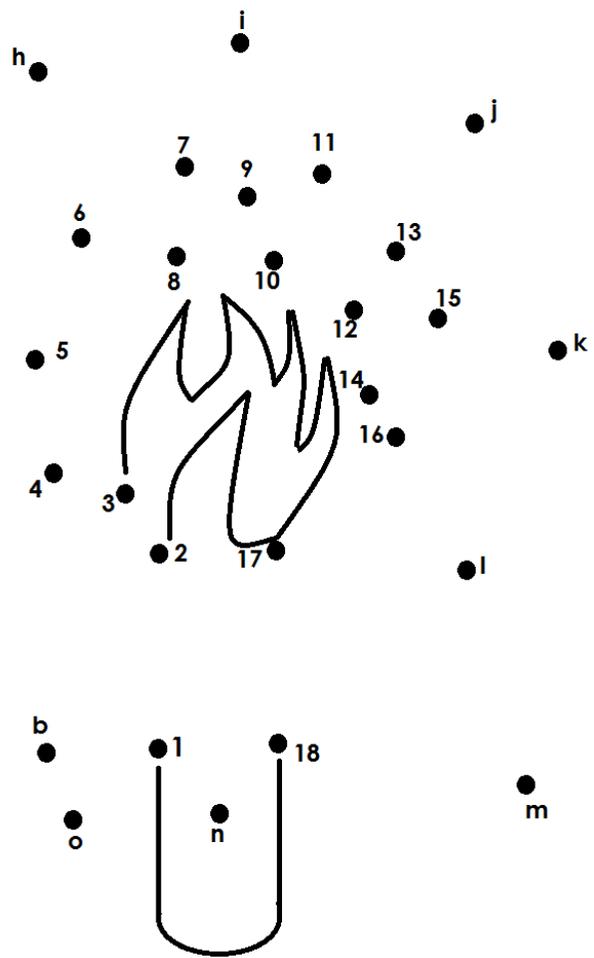


Join the dots in the right order to see what God told Gideon's army to fight with.

[Start at 1.]
They blew their _____.

[Start at a.]
They hid the _____.

[Start at 1.]
in the _____.



Bible Verse
If God is for us,
who can be
against us?
Romans 8:31

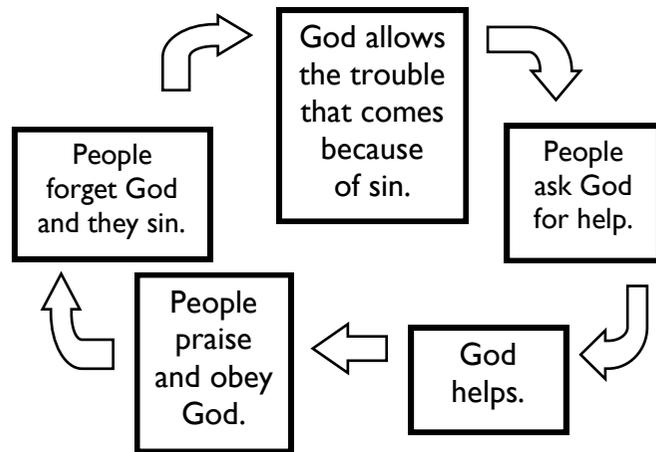
If God is for us,
who can be against us?
Thunder can be very loud and powerful and quite frightening.
Who is in charge of thunder?
People who are angry or might hurt you can be very frightening. The Bible says 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' *How has God shown most clearly that He is for us?*
The Bible goes on to say that God did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.
Is there anything or anyone that God does not have power over?

Something to think about and discuss

- What sort of things go wrong for you?
- What do you do at such times?
- Have you prayed?
- Did it help?
- What sort of answers have come to your prayers?
- God has promised always to be there to help us, even when He doesn't seem to be. Sometimes we have to wait for God to fix our problems. Sometimes He doesn't fix them up in the way we expect.
- Can you think of such times?



There was a pattern to the history of God's people during the time of the judges.



Think about your own life.

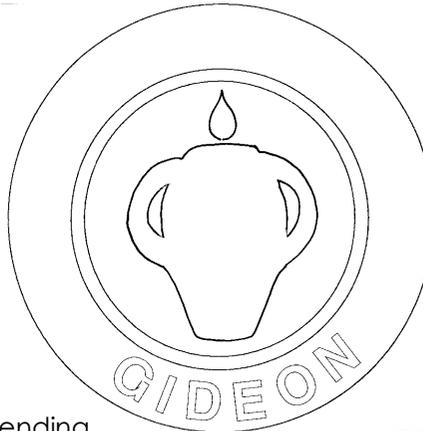
- Does this pattern happen in your own life?
- At what point in the pattern are you right now?

About the Gideon logo

The **circle** is a symbol of God himself, without beginning or ending.
 The **torch** is a symbol of light, representing the Light of the world, Jesus Christ our Lord.
 The **pitcher** comes from the story of Gideon. A pitcher was normally used for carrying water, but Gideon used the pitcher to hold the light. The pitcher is a symbol that members of The Gideons are willing to lay aside their personal plans and ambitions, in order to bring people the good news of Jesus.

Bible Verse
If God is for us, who can be against us?
Romans 8:31

This is the symbol for The Gideons and they stamp it on each of the Bibles they give away each year.



The story of The Gideons



When John Nicholson was 12 years old, he promised his mother that he would spend some time every day reading his Bible. Some amazing things have happened because John kept that promise.

John Nicholson became a travelling representative of his company. One night he was staying in a crowded hotel (in Wisconsin, USA 1898) and had to share a room with a stranger, Samuel Hill. John took out his Bible for his daily reading time, and learnt that Samuel, too, was a Christian. They talked together for a long time, wondering how Christians like themselves, who spent most of their time travelling, could do something to help each other, and to share the good news with other people.

A few years later, John Nicholson and Samuel Hill founded an organization of Christian men. They chose the name "Gideons". Gideon was a man who was willing to do exactly what God wanted him to do, irrespective of his own judgement as to the plans or result. The Gideons try to practise Gideon's humility, faith, and obedience in their own lives.

Today The Gideons is a worldwide association of Christian business and professional men, who are representatives of their local churches. They give of their time voluntarily to support one another, to witness personally to those around them and to distribute Bibles and testaments. The Gideons distribute more than 300,000 Bibles and testaments in Australia each year.



Grace alone

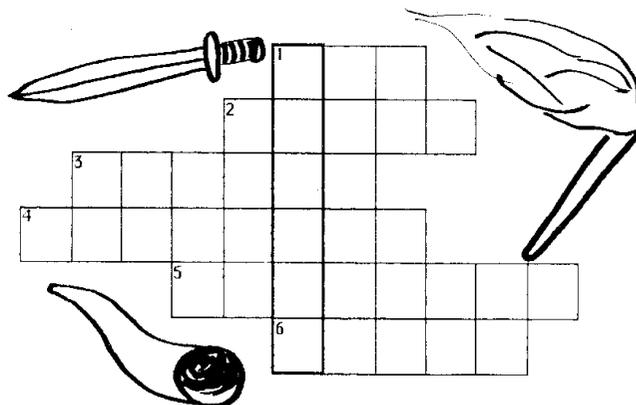
Gideon won the battle, not because of his own power but because God used him to defeat the Midianites. God gave Gideon and His people victory, not because they deserved it, but because He loved them.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has won for us the victory over sin, death, and the devil.

God's love which causes Him to give victory to people who don't deserve it is called GRACE.

Look up and read what the Bible says about GRACE in Romans 3:23,24; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:7.

Puzzle answers: God, light, noise, shouting, trumpets, swords



Fill in the puzzle to find the name of the judge God used to save his people. (1 down)

The (2) _____ of the torches,
 the (6) _____ of breaking jars,
 the (5) _____ and
 (4) _____

scared the Midianites even though they didn't see

any (3) _____.

(1) _____ had won the victory.

