



Date: _____
Series: God is Our Rescuer
Fall Year 2, Lesson 22

The Rescue is By the Power of God

Take Home Point: *God wants us to live in his power, not our own. *Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Judges 7. Gideon's army defeats Midian

Key Verse: 2 Corthinians 12:9a "But he told me: 'My kindness is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak.'"

We will help kids know:

- Any true rescue and victory we have is by the power of God, not by our power.
- The Bible event of how Gideon's army was reduced from 32,000 men to 300 men to demonstrate how God's power rescues.
- Sometimes we feel "broken" on the inside. This is when we feel weak or sad. God can especially give us his victory when we feel broken.

We will help kids feel:

- Awe at the intervening power of God and completeness of his victory.
- Hope in knowing that God will rescue them in their time of need or brokenness.

We will help kids do:

- Identify things in their lives they can and cannot yet do because of their age.
- Express faith and confidence in God's saving power through Jesus Christ, because it is something they cannot do on their own.
- Construct a simple art project using broken craft sticks to form a cross. Discuss our brokenness and how God rescues us through Jesus.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3-4	Kids try to make a paper match stand on its side. This can be done when it is bent in two. The same can be true of us. When we realize we are weak and broken by sin, we can trust God to rescue us and he will.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper match for each child
Large Group 	4 7-8 8-11 11-12	<p>Overview</p> <p>Puppet Presentation: “Gordy Fights for God” – Gordy thinks because he knows martial arts he is powerful enough to beat up his enemies.</p> <p>Dramatic Monologue: “Gideon attacks the Midianites” – Judges 7 tells of God reducing the Israelite army from 32,000 to 300 men and leading them to victory.</p> <p>Puppet Presentation Conclusion: “Gordy Fights for God” – Gordy learns that Jesus has won for us the greatest victory.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bible Gordy wearing a headband poster board or easel markers flash paper pole or stick with a tin can fastened on top. Wrap a rag around the outside of the tin can to look like a torch. Be careful not to cover the opening as it could catch on fire. Insert three sheets of flash paper into the can. matches costume for Gideon
Small Group Application 	4-6	Each child will be given a paper match to break in half. They will be reminded that this symbolizes our brokenness. <i>*God wants us to live in his power, not our own.</i> Kids will glue their matches on the paper in the shape of a cross.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one “Review Statements” page, cut into strips per group (see appendix – page 14) half sheet of white paper (per child) markers or crayons paper match for each child one piece of construction (or color) paper per group glue

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

Hand every child a paper match and give them the following challenge:

I want to give you a challenge that might seem impossible, but it isn't. I want you to hold a paper match at least an inch above the floor (or table) and drop it so it lands on its side. It might seem impossible, but it can be done.

As children try to accomplish this feat with their paper matches, invite them into discussion.

What was very hard for you to do a couple years ago but is easy to do now? (Examples might include tying shoes, riding a bike, reading chapter books, making a basket on a regulation height basketball hoop, etc.)

After about five minutes, say the following:

I am going to show you how to drop the paper match so it lands on its side. But before I do, I want to ask one last question.

Have everyone put down their paper matches so they can focus on the question.

What is one thing that is spiritually impossible for anyone to do?

Listen to answers and then say:

The one thing that is spiritually impossible for anyone to do is to earn heaven on his own. No one can do enough good things to get to heaven. God performed an amazing rescue for us. He sent his own Son Jesus into the world to die on the cross for us. If we admit our sin or weakness and trust in Jesus, we will be saved by his power. Only by accepting Jesus as our Savior can we go to heaven.

Now watch me drop the paper match, and it will stand on its side.

Right before dropping the paper match bend it so it begins to break in the middle. Now that it has somewhat of an "L" shape, it will land on its side when dropped.

Just like the paper match can stand on its side when it is broken, the same can be true of us. When we realize we are weak and broken by sin, we can trust God to rescue us and he will.

Today we will continue with the Old Testament story of Gideon, whom God used as a rescuer, too. In the Bible event, God makes sure that everyone knows that the rescue is done by his power and not by man's power. We can have the same power and rescue that Gideon had. Today we will find out just how powerful that rescue is. **God wants us to live in his power, not our own.*

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

Puppet Presentation: "Gordy Fights for God" – Gordy thinks because he knows martial arts he is powerful enough to beat up his enemies.

Dramatic Monologue: "Gideon attacks the Midianites" – The Bible event from Judges 7 of God reducing the Israelite army from 32,000 to 300 men and leading them to victory.

Puppet Presentation Conclusion: "Gordy Fights for God" – Gordy learns that Jesus has won for us the greatest victory through his death and resurrection.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Give each child a small strip of paper with an incident that took place in the Bible event. (See the "Review Statements" page.) Hand out a half sheet of paper and markers to each child. Have them write the number from the strip on their paper and ask them to draw a very simple picture or symbol to illustrate their part of the story. Have them keep their part a secret so the rest of the group can guess what part of the story is illustrated. When the children are finished drawing, have everyone guess which part of the story each picture signifies. Then arrange their pictures in order.

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Why do you think God wanted to have only a few soldiers to defeat the Midianites? *(He wanted his people to trust that the rescue was the Lord's. *God wants us to live in his power, not our own.)*

Imagine you were one of the 300 soldiers finally left after Gideon had sent all the others away. How do you think you would feel? *(Scared, or possibly trusting because of Gideon's example.)*

How do you think you would feel when the battle was won following God's special battle plan? *(Thankful that God is my rescuer.)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

God broke down the army from 32,000 to 300 men so he could perform a wonderful victory. Do you think God wants to cause a big victory in your life? What are some battles you are facing in your life right now?

Read from the Bible 2Corinthians 12:9a:

"But he (God) told me: 'My kindness is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak. . .'" Remember, ****God wants us to live in his power, not our own.***

Remember the paper match I broke in the beginning of our lesson? Only after it was broken would it stand up. That reminds us of ourselves. If we think we are strong enough on our own to stand up, then we are wrong. If we think we can earn our way to heaven just by being good enough, then we are wrong as well. But when we feel broken on the inside, we know we can count on God's strength, not our own.

Everyone is broken because we have all sinned against God. We are not powerful enough by ourselves to lead a perfect life like Jesus. But when we admit we need his forgiveness, he helps us stand up. It is just like how this paper match stood up on its side when I threw it down. God wants us to tell him that we need him.

God has done a powerful thing to rescue us from our sin and our brokenness. He sent his own Son Jesus into the world. Jesus died on the cross to pay the price for our forgiveness. He is with us wherever we go. His power is even greater than the power he gave Gideon for a victory.

Application Activity:

Hand each child a paper match, and have him break it in half. Remind them that this symbolizes our brokenness. Write the words, ****God wants us to live in his power, not our own,**** on the color paper. Have kids glue their matches on the paper in the shape of a cross.

While they are forming the cross, talk about some of the ways God could give us a victory in our lives. This is a time for sharing problems the children are facing and praying for those things.

Closing Prayer:

Conclude with prayer about the problems children discussed while working on the cross.

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Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

Gordy Fights for God Puppet Presentation

Gordy wears a headband as if he is ready for a martial arts combat.

Presenter: Today, boys and girls, we will learn about a rescue that came from the power of God. In this Bible event, God shows us that it is his power that saves. He even broke armies in half to show his might.

Gordy: *(From offstage.)* Oh, yeah...Well, I could break them in half myself!

Presenter: What was that? Gordy, are you there? Kids, let's call Gordy.

Kids chant, "Gor-dy! Gor-dy! Gordy!"

Gordy: Hi-yah! Whap! Chee-ca!

Presenter: What's going on, Gordy?

Gordy: My name is Kung-fu Gordy.

Presenter: Oh, I can see you certainly look like a kung-fu something or other. What is this all about?

Gordy: Well, we are talking about how God rescues his people, and I want to be on the rescue team. I want to be able to beat up the devil, (do a kung-fu yell, like "ahhh-yeahhh") beat up bullies, ("ahhh-yeahhh") and beat up anything that needs beating up because I am Kung Fu Gordy. Ahhh-yeahhh, yeahhh, yeahhh.

Presenter: Gordy, you need to listen to today's Bible event.

Gordy: Why? Does someone need beating up?

Presenter: It's true God had some enemies that were pestering his people, and he wanted to drive them out. He used Gideon to do this.

Gordy: And God taught Gideon kung-fu, right?

Presenter: No, he didn't teach Gideon kung-fu. He did something most surprising. He took away almost all of Gideon's army. God did this to show everyone it wasn't the size of the army that brought victory. It was the size and power of God.

Gordy: I get it. God is the Master of kung-fu.

Presenter: Gordy! God is a loving God, who wants to rescue his people. Why don't you watch for this today, Gordy.

Gordy: Well, okay. But first I think I need to break something.

Presenter: Oh, come now, Gordy.

Gordy: No, you come now. Come here. I want to tell you a secret.

Presenter: But we're in front of all these people... oh, alright.

(The presenter comes close. Gordy lands a chop.)

Gordy: Aaahhhh! (*as in pain*) Some things are too hard to break.

Presenter: Gordy, you will find out today that God breaks these armies in half so he can let his power work through them. Sometimes our lives get broken because of our weakness, but that is when God helps us all the more.

Gideon Attacks the Midianites

Dramatic Monologue

You will need a poster board or an easel with markers to show the math of how Gideon's army was reduced in numbers. You will also need a pole or stick with a tin can fastened to the top. Wrap a rag around the outside of the tin can to look like a torch. Be careful not to cover the opening as it could catch on fire. Insert three sheets of flash paper that will be lit into the can. A horn or trumpet (real or a toy) is also needed.

The Gideon character should *tell* the story of his victory rather than read it. The story is formatted as an outline to help remember the plot:

Review God's Message of the Fleece

Greetings, in the name of God. I am Gideon, judge over Israel. Perhaps you remember my story as I told it last week. I was not a very important man in my family or tribe. Yet God called me to be a special leader over his people, Israel.

The Midianite army swarmed like locusts as they invaded our land with their livestock and tents. There were so many Midianites that their camels couldn't be counted. We called to our Lord for help, and he answered. I had a hard time believing God would use me to bring

a victory so I placed a fleece, a skin of a sheep, on the ground. I asked God to show me a sign and make the fleece wet and the ground dry. The next morning it was so. Then I asked God to make the fleece dry and the ground wet. Again the Lord confirmed this sign. Though I felt weak and not up to the task I was confident that God himself would go before me.

Too Many Men—32,000 minus 22,000

The men of Israel had answered the call to arms. Thirty two thousand men turned out. It was a mighty army. Surely God would give us victory. But God had another plan. With so many soldiers we might think the victory was because of the strength of our numbers. God wanted us to know for sure that he was the one who rescued us. So God told me to send home all who were afraid. Guess how many left? Twenty-two thousand, which meant there were only 10,000 left.

On the board write “32,000 - 22,000 = 10,000.”

Still Too Many Men – Down to 300

With 10,000 men it seemed we faced an impossible situation. The Midianites were too great to be counted. How could we go against them with only 10,000 soldiers? But God knew best, and he knew 10,000 was still too many.

He told me to take the men down to the water and have them take a drink. Some of the men would lay down their weapons and kneel to drink. The others would hold their weapons in one hand and drink from the other hand. God told me to divide them into two groups according to how they drank. Then God chose only men that held the weapon in one hand and took a drink from their other hand. This total was only 300 men. That’s all the army I had left.

Write on the board “10,000 - 9,700 = 300.”

Gideon Spies On the Midianites

Now I had so few men that it didn’t look like an army, but I knew that the Lord promised to help, and I would do all he commanded. He showed me one more time that he was powerful.

He told me to go down to the camp of the Midianites at night and spy on them. If I felt the least bit afraid before, God assured me he would show me his power. I snuck down in the middle of the night with one of my servants. I listened to some of their soldiers on the outskirts of their camp. I heard a man telling about his dream. He said, “In my

dream I saw a round loaf of barley bread tumbling into the Midianite camp. It struck the tent with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed.”

The other man said, “Surely your dream means that Gideon will come against us and defeat us for God is with him.” After I heard that, I worshiped God and thanked him. I knew it would be God’s power at work to defeat them, and not our own.

Gideon’s Battle Plans

I returned to my men and divided them into three groups of one hundred. Each man had a torch, a jar, and a trumpet.

Hold up the torch.

I told them to circle the enemy camp and take their places until I gave them a signal.

Gideon’s Attack

Our men had quietly circled the enemy. All the Midianites were asleep except the watchmen, but they saw nothing. Then at my signal I told my men, “Do what I do.” I broke the jar that was holding up the torch and suddenly 300 torches were quickly burning around the Midianite camp. Can you imagine their surprise?

Light the flash paper.

I sounded the trumpet (Blow horn or trumpet.) and there was a trumpet blast when my men joined in. We all shouted “For the Lord and for Gideon!”

Kids, why don’t you shout it with me? “For the Lord!” (*Kids repeat.*)
“And for Gideon!” (*Kids repeat.*)

The Midianites ran away screaming as they fled. They scrambled through the darkness so fast they trampled one another. Some of them fell on their own swords. They hurried to the Jordan River where they hoped they would be safe, but my brave men followed them to make sure they were driven off the land. By now the Midianites lost many men including their princes and even two of their kings. The Midianites troubled us no more.

**God Wants Us To Live In His Power Not Our Own*

And so I learned that day that even with the weakness of our numbers, God was strong and mighty. And it is true in my life that **God wants us to live in his power, not our own.*

Gordy Fights for God

Puppet Presentation Conclusion

Gordy: That was cool. But I have a question.

Presenter: What's on your mind, Gordy?

Gordy: If God did such a big victory like that for Gideon, and Gideon didn't even know kung-fu, could he ever do something like that for me?

Presenter: Sure, Gordy.

Gordy: Cool. Because I would love to smash those pots and wave those torches and shout, and then watch all those people run away.

Presenter: Gordy, God used all those things to help Gideon defeat God's enemies. But I don't think you'll need them to have your victory.

Gordy: Why not? If people aren't scared of me as a kung fu dude, then I bet they would be scared of me running down the street with a burning torch yelling, "For the Lord and for Gordy!"

Presenter: I'm sure that would scare some people. But God has a better victory for you. It comes through his rescuer, his Son Jesus.

Gordy: Jesus? What does he have to do with Gideon?

Presenter: Jesus was God's own Son. Jesus won a victory for you.

Gordy: Yeah. Jesus is so powerful he could beat up any bad guy!

Presenter: But the victory that Jesus won for you wasn't by beating people up. It was by letting himself get beat up.

Gordy: Oh? You mean when he died on the cross.

Presenter: Yes, when Jesus gave his life for us on the cross, he won a great victory that we all can have.

Gordy: What is the victory?

Presenter: It is victory over the power of sin and the devil. When you trust Jesus as your Savior, you have the victory of having all your sins washed away. The devil can no longer keep you away from God. You also have the victory of Jesus working in your life so that others might hear about Jesus and follow him.

Gordy: Wow. That makes me want to be on his side...to fight for God.

Presenter: Better yet, God wants to fight for you.

Gordy: Way cool. That's even better than kung-fu.

Presenter: Why don't you close us in prayer, Gordy.

Gordy: Okay, ahhh-yeahhh! Here we go. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for showing us how you wanted Gideon to live in your power and not his own. Help us to do the same. Thank you that Jesus gave his life for us so we can have your victory. Help us trust you and not our own power. In Jesus' name, Amen.

1

The Midianite Army was so large their camels couldn't be counted. (Judges 6:5.)

2

Gideon used a sheep's skin fleece to test God's calling to him to lead the people to victory. (Judges 6:36-40.)

3

Gideon's army was too big, so God sent home all those who were scared. The army shrank from 32,000 to 10,000. (Judges 7:3.)

4

Gideon's army was still too big so God sent home all those who didn't kneel to drink. Three hundred were left. (Judges 7:6.)

5

Gideon spied on the Midianites. He heard about the dream of a Midianite soldier that assured him of a victory. (Judges 7:13-14.)

6

Gideon gave every Israelite soldier a torch, a jar, and a trumpet. The 300 were divided into three groups. (Judges 7:16.)

7

The men covered their torches with their jars and surrounded the enemy. (Judges 7:16-17.)

8

The soldiers broke their jars, showed their torches, blew their trumpets and shouted, "For the Lord and for Gideon!" (Judges 7:19-20.)

9

The Midianites were so afraid they ran away. (Judges 7:21.)
