

Gideon the Small

Judges 6:1-7:25

To teach that God's power to save is not limited by our weakness, failure or fear.

Cycle

<https://youtu.be/q3l0BmstG6Q>

Intro game

NO WAY

In today's true story from the Bible God did something that seemed impossible. He used a leader and army that seemed too weak to rescue his people from their enemies.

Lets get started

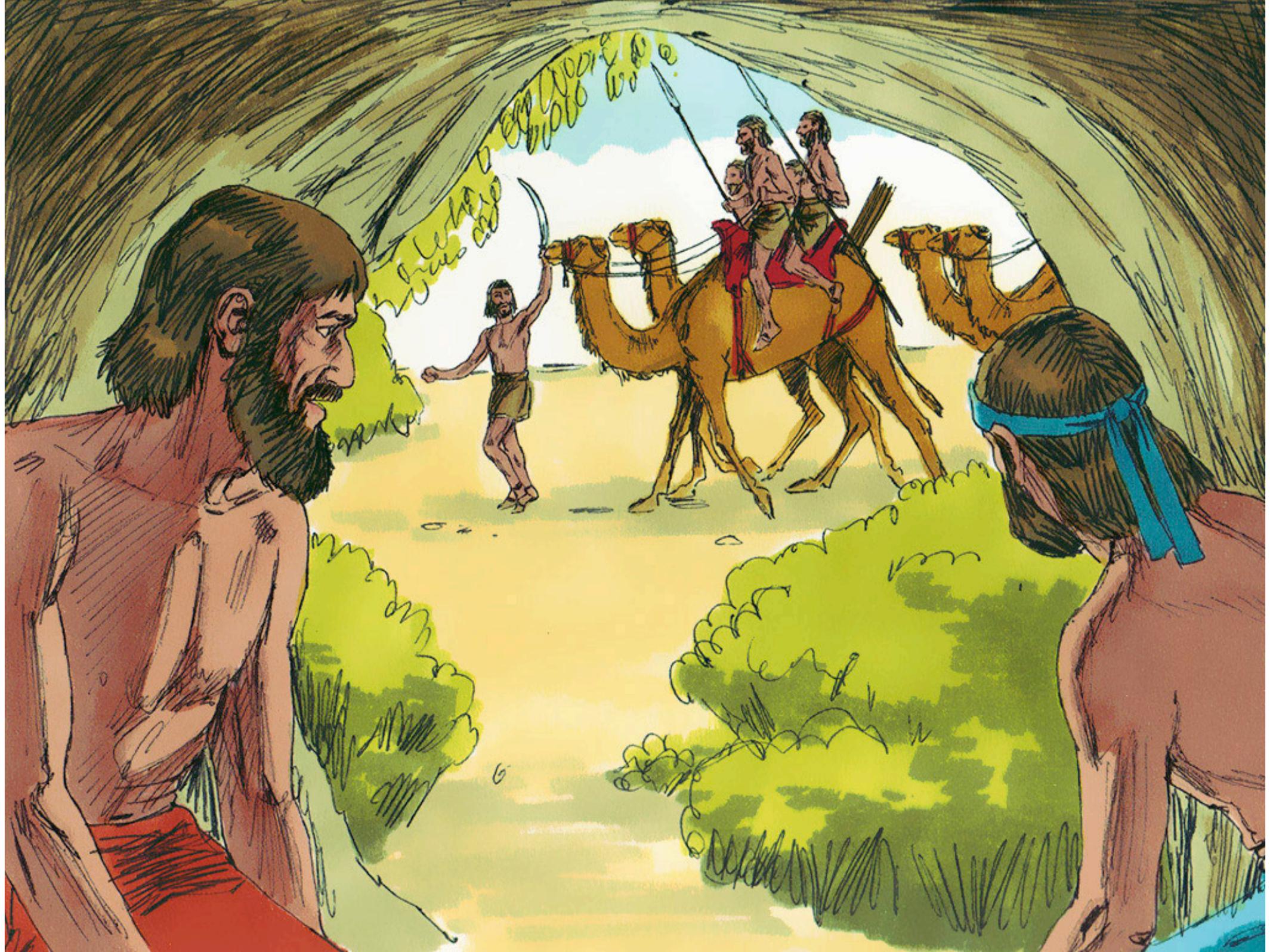
<https://youtu.be/yrkbXR2v6uY>

Get your armies ready

Read the story

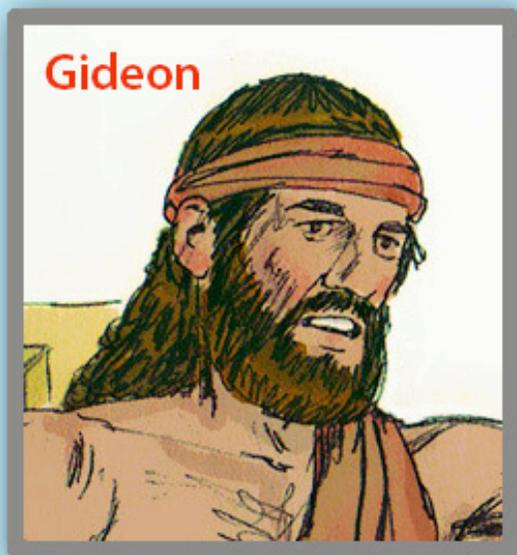






ISRAEL

IN THE TIME OF
THE JUDGES











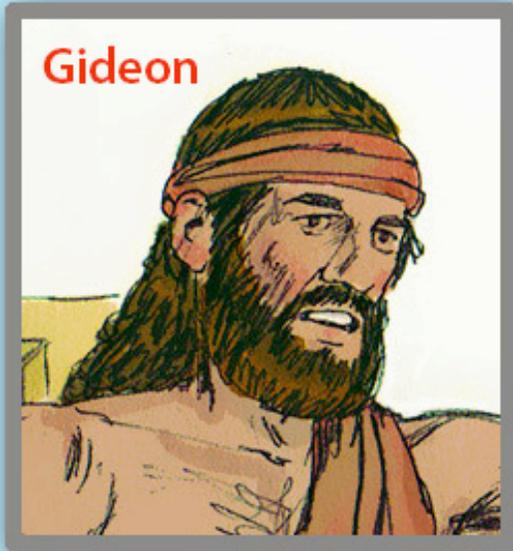






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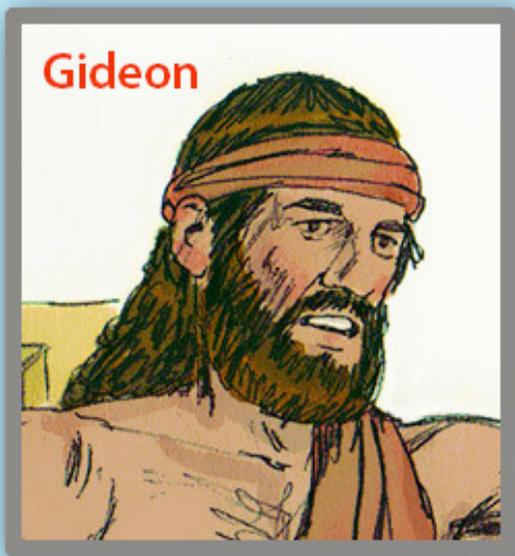
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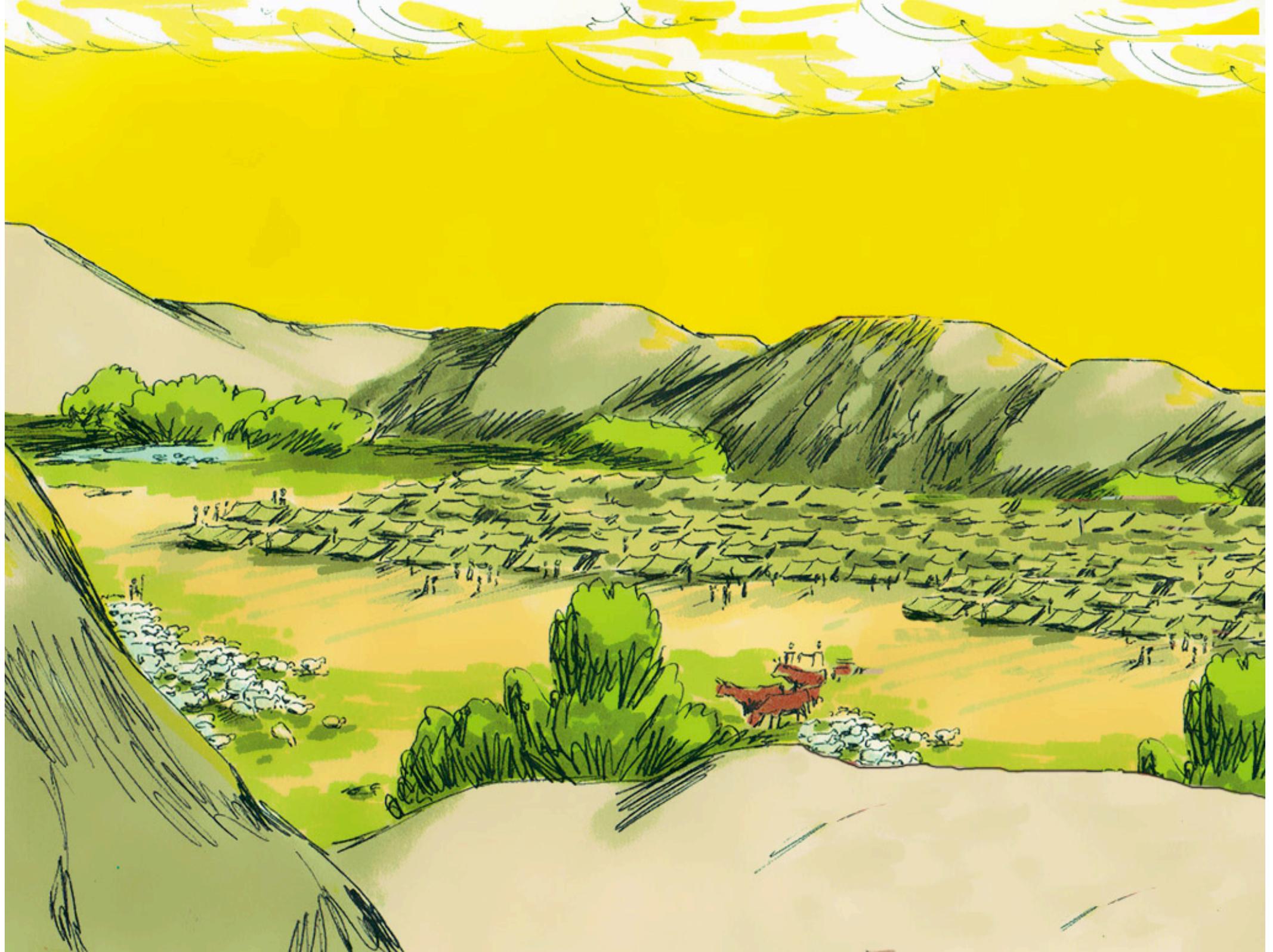




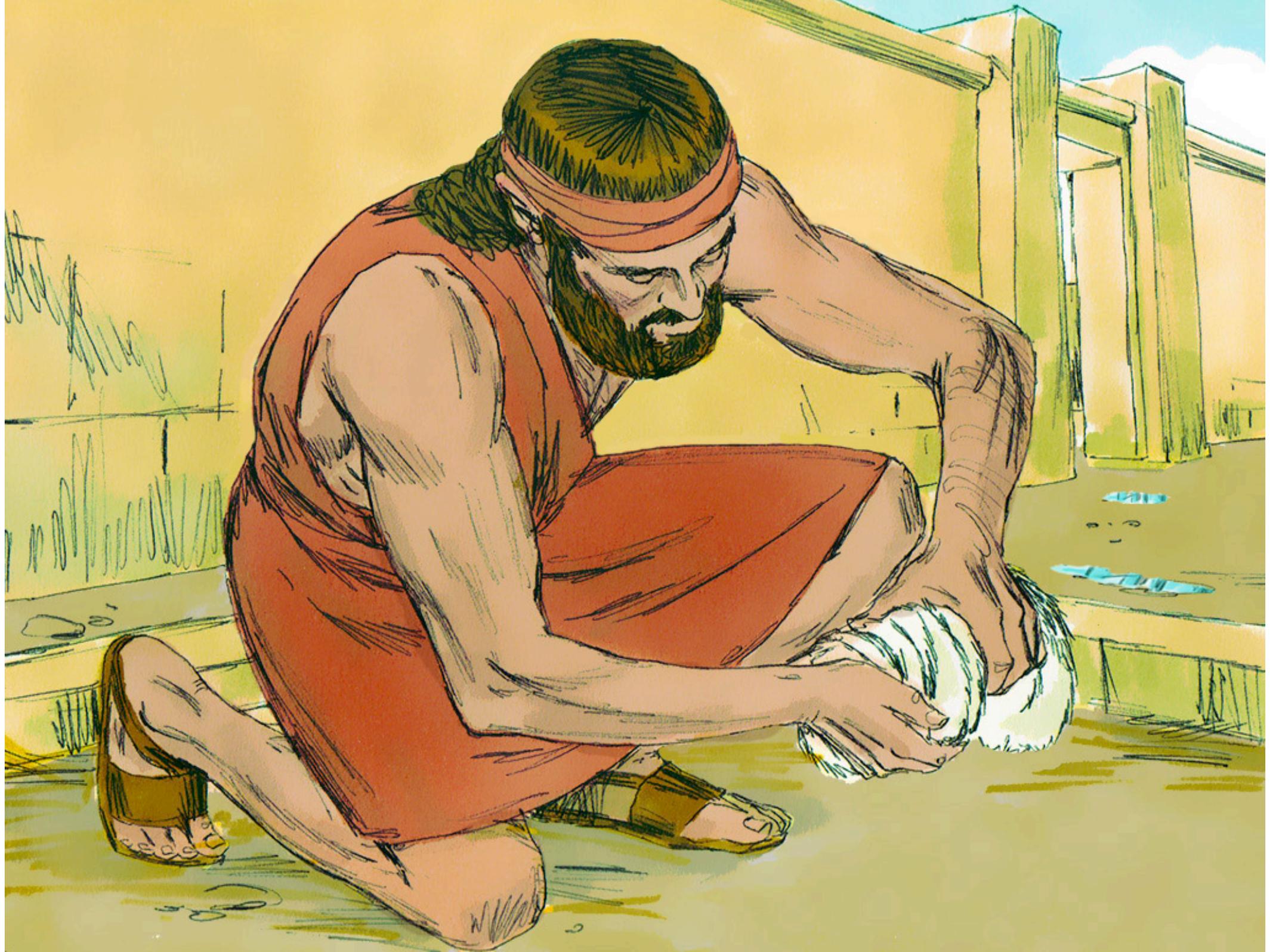
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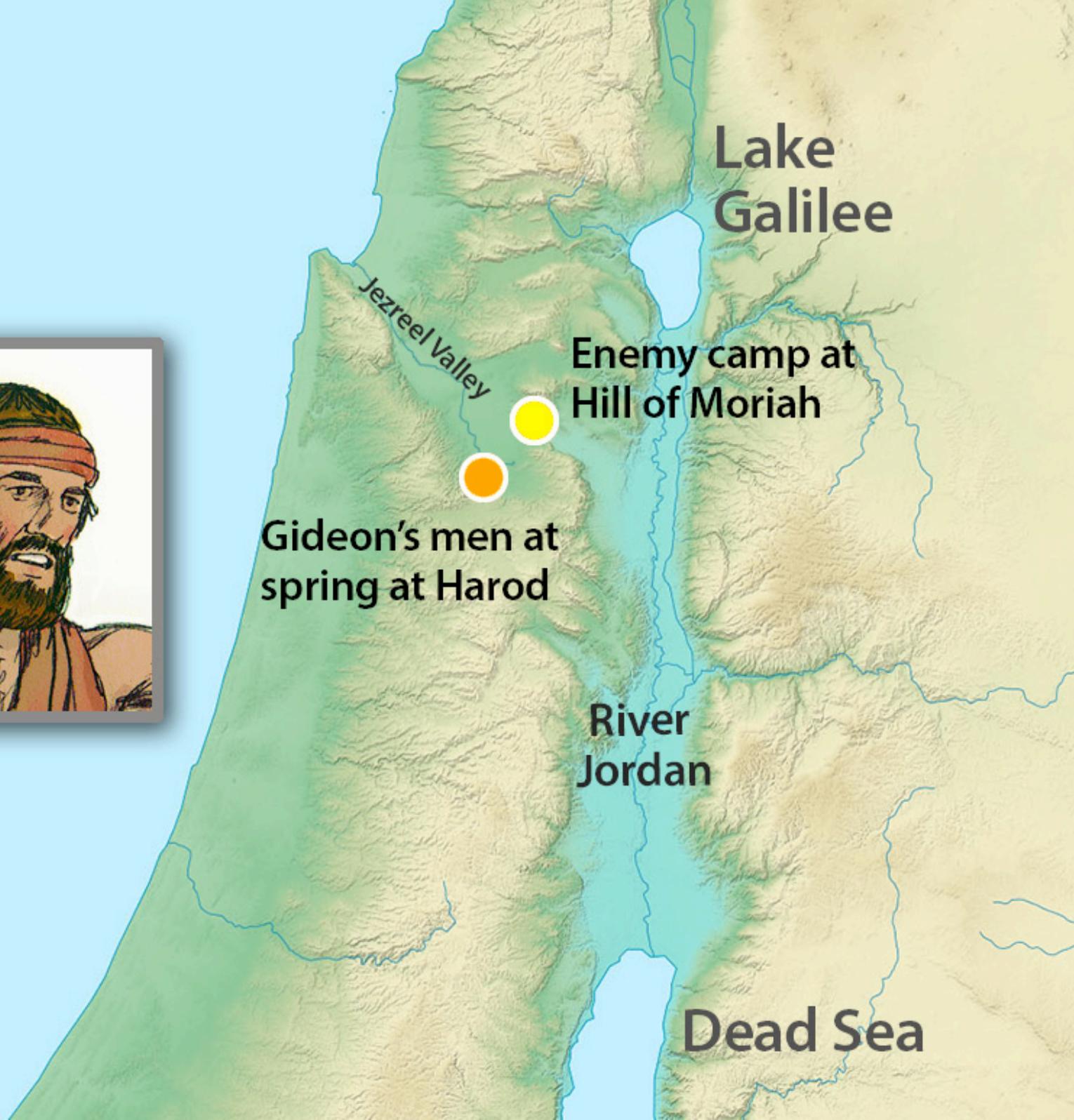
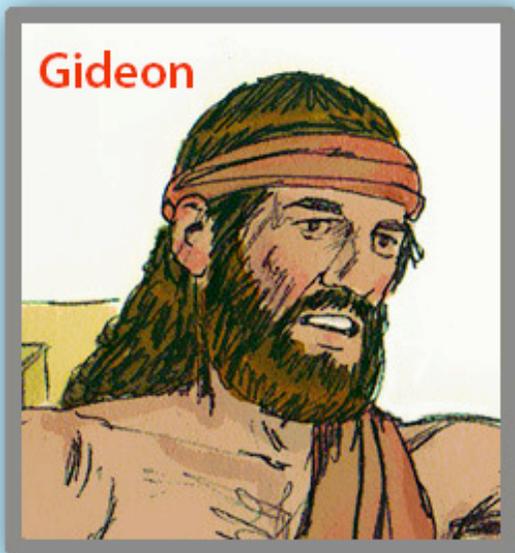






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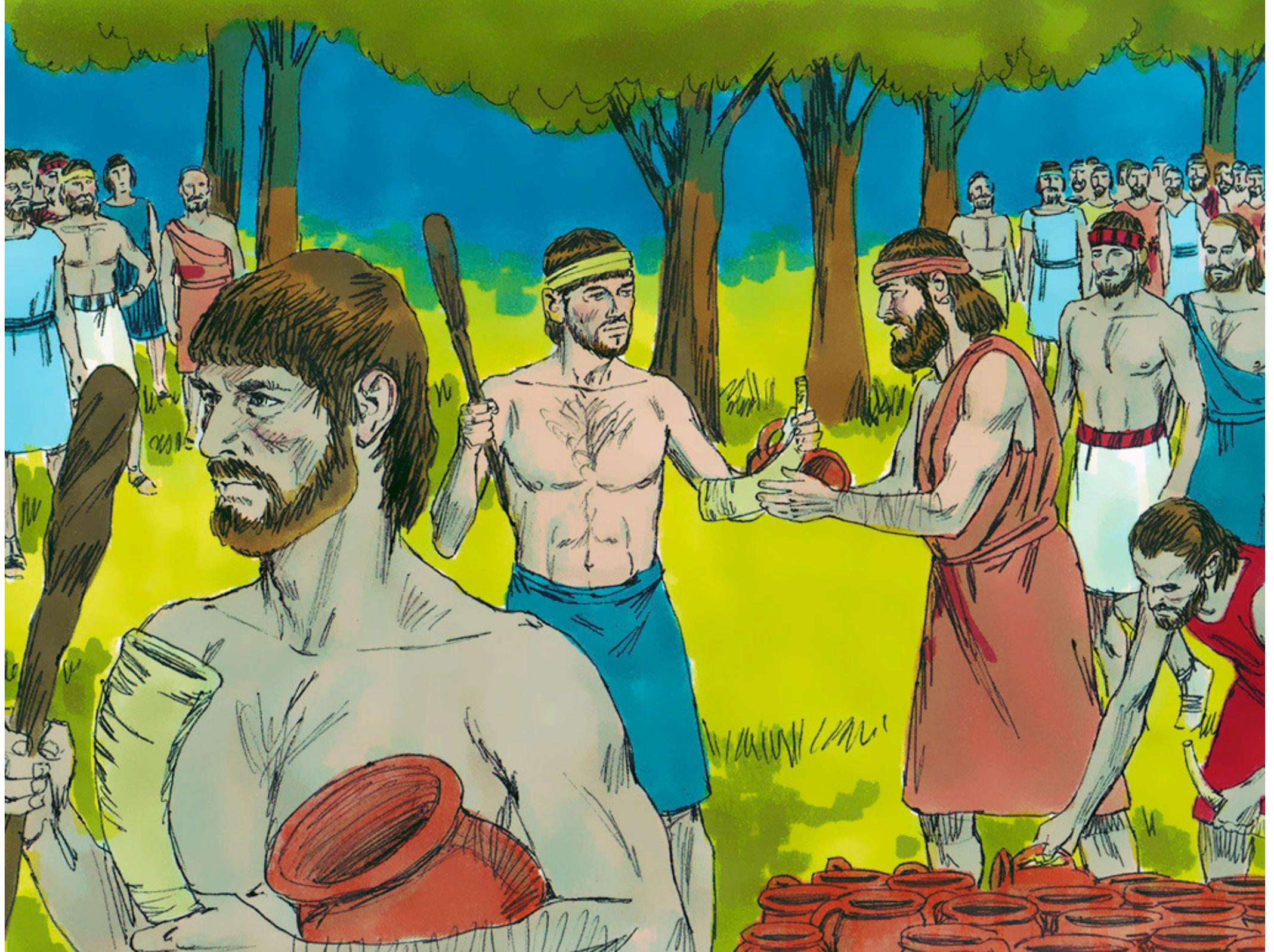










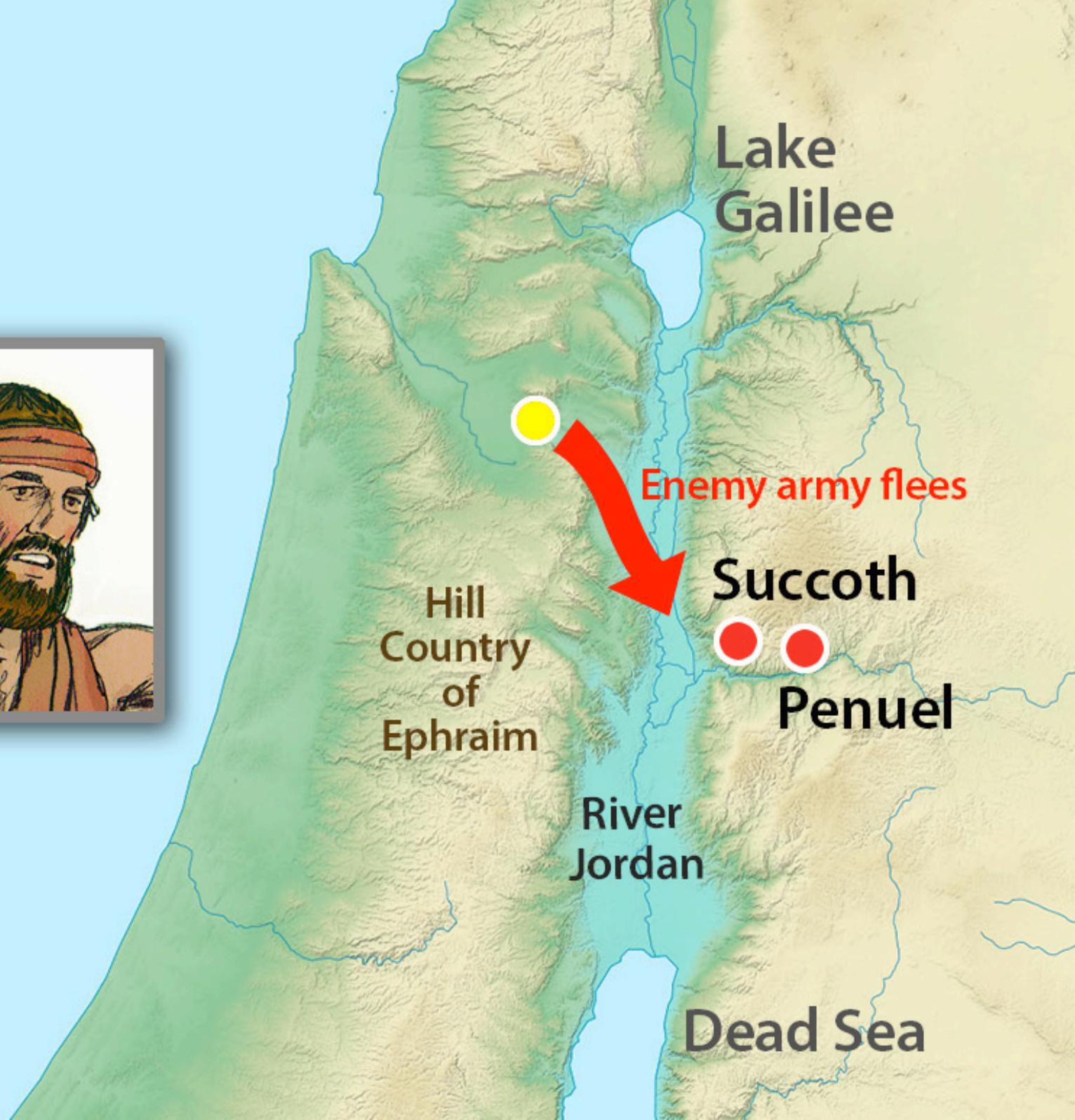
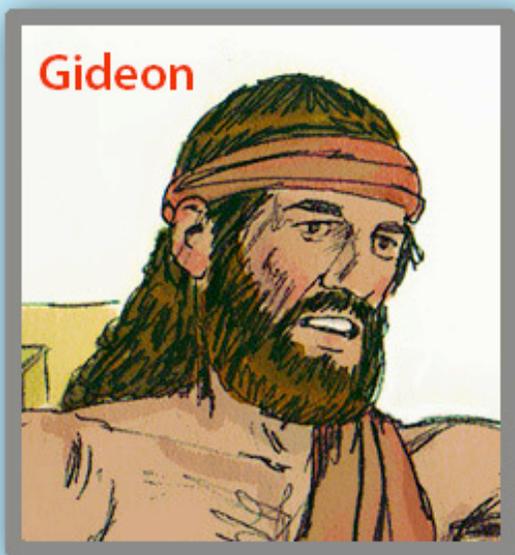






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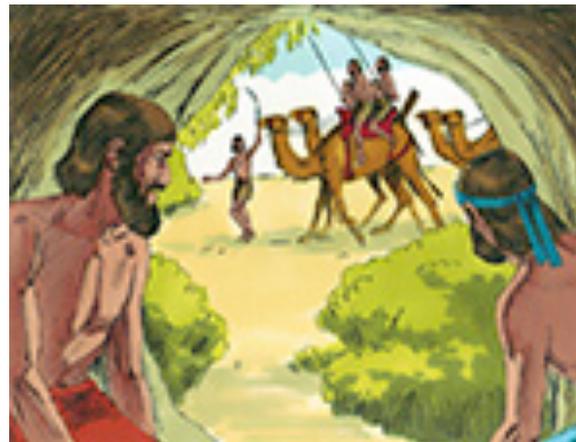
Once again, God's people turned their backs on Him to worship idols so God allowed the Midianites to treat them badly for seven years.



Whenever the Israelites were ready for harvest, marauders from Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east would attack Israel and destroy their crops.



They arrived on camels and they stayed until the land was stripped bare. The Midianites were so cruel the Israelites hid in mountains, caves, and strongholds. God's people were reduced to starvation.



Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help. God sent prophets to tell them not to worship idols but they did not listen. Then an angel of God went and sat under the great tree at Ophrah belonging to Joash.



Joash's son Gideon was threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress. The angel greeted him, 'Mighty hero, the Lord is with you!' Gideon replied, 'If the Lord were with us why have we been handed over to the Midianites?



The Lord's angel said, 'Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!'

Gideon retorted, 'My clan is the weakest in the tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my family!'

The Lord replied, 'I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man.'

Disbelieving Gideon asked for a sign.

Gideon asked the stranger to stay while he went to prepare food. When he brought fresh bread, broth and freshly cooked goat's meat the stranger asked him to put the meat and bread on a rock then pour the broth over it.



Then the angel of the Lord touched the meat and bread with the tip of the staff in his hand, and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed the meat and bread. Then the angel of the Lord disappeared.



Gideon exclaimed, 'I'm doomed! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!' The Lord replied, 'Do not be afraid. You will not die.' That night the Lord gave Gideon instructions to carry out.



With the help of 10 servants Gideon took one of his father's bulls and pulled down his father's idol of Baal. They cut down the pole his family used to worship the idol Asherah.



Then he made an altar to God, placed the wood of the Asherah pole on it and sacrificed the bull to God.



The next morning the people of the town were furious to find the idols had been destroyed. When they discovered Gideon had done this, a mob gathered outside Joash's house demanding Gideon's death. Joash confronted



the mob, 'Why are you defending Baal? If Baal truly is a god, let him defend himself and destroy the one who broke down his altar!' From then on Gideon was called Jerub-baal, which means 'Let Baal defend himself'.

Soon afterward the armies of Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east formed an alliance against Israel and crossed the Jordan, camping in the valley of Jezreel.



The Spirit of the Lord took possession of Gideon. He blew a ram's horn as a call to arms, and the men of the clan of Abiezer came to him.



He also sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, summoning their warriors, and all of them responded.

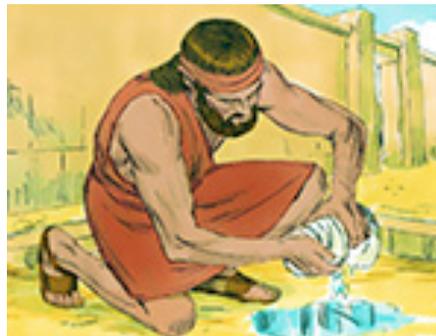


Gideon still had doubts about taking on the might army in the valley. So he said to God, 'Prove you are going to use me to rescue Israel in this way. I will put a wool fleece on the threshing floor tonight. If the fleece is wet with



dew in the morning but the ground is dry, then I will know that you are going to help me.'

The next morning the ground was dry but the fleece was wet with dew. But Gideon still had doubts. 'Please don't be angry with me,' he begged the Lord, 'Let me use the fleece for one more test. This time let the fleece remain dry while the ground around it is wet with dew.'



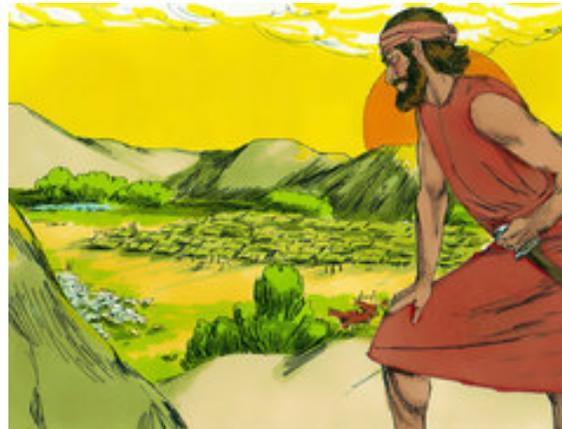
The next morning there was heavy dew on the ground but the fleece was dry.



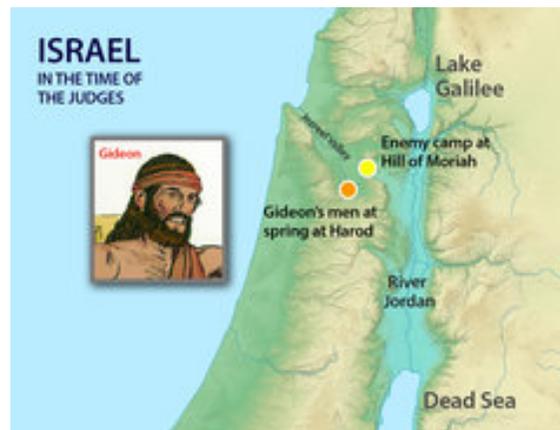
Gideon knew the Lord had chosen him and his small army to deliver the Israelites from the 135,000 enemy soldiers camped in the valley of Jezreel.



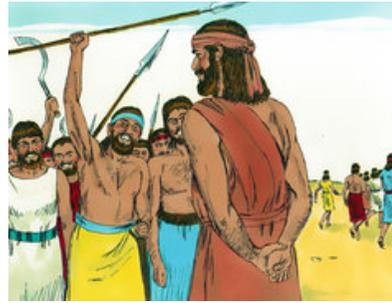
The Midianites and their allies had gathered an army of 135,000 to rob the Israelites of their crops and food. God has promised Gideon He would give him victory over them.



The enemy were camped in the valley of Jezreel near the hill of Moreh. Gideon had 32,000 warriors from the nearby tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali who had gathered near the spring of Harod. They were outnumbered more than 4:1.



The Lord told Gideon, 'You have too many warriors. If I let you defeat the Midianites the Israelites will boast they did it themselves. Send home all those who are timid or afraid.' So 22,000 of them went home, leaving only 10,000 who were willing to fight. They were now outnumbered by over 13:1.



Then the Lord told Gideon, 'There are still too many! Bring them down to the spring.' At the spring, the Lord said, 'Divide the men into two groups. In one put all those who cup water in their hands and lap it up with their tongues like dogs. In the other group put all those who kneel down and drink with their mouths in the stream.' Only 300 of the men drank from their hands. God told Gideon to these 300 men would bring victory and the others should be sent home. They were now outnumbered 450:1.



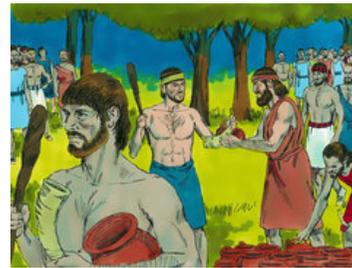
That night the Lord told Gideon, 'If you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah. Listen to what the Midianites are saying, and you will be greatly encouraged'



Gideon and Purah crept up on the enemy just as a man was telling his companion about a dream. 'In my dream a loaf of barley bread came tumbling down into the Midianite camp. It hit a tent, turned it over, and knocked it flat!' His companion answered, 'Your dream can only mean God has given Gideon victory over us.' Gideon bowed and worshipped God then returned to his camp.



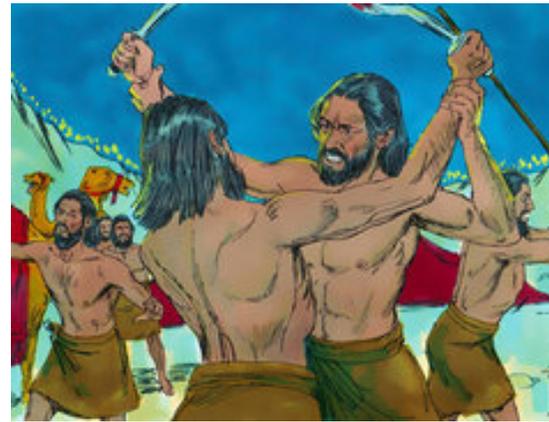
'Get up! For the Lord has given you victory over the Midianite hordes!' Gideon shouted. He divided the 300 men into three groups and gave each man a ram's horn and a clay jar with a torch in it. He instructed them that as soon they heard him blow his horn they should do the same and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon!'



Just after the changing of the guard at midnight, Gideon's group of 100 men reached the edge of the Midianite camp. Suddenly, they blew the rams' horns and broke their clay jars. The other groups did the same. They held the blazing torches in their left hands, their horns in their right hands shouted, 'A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!'



Each man stood still and watched as the lord caused the Midianites to rush around in a panic. They began fighting among each other with their swords.



Those who were not killed fled back to the river Jordan. Gideon sent for the warriors of Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh, to chase them. He also sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim to cut the enemy off at the shallow river crossings.



They captured Oreb and Zeeb, the two Midianite commanders and executed them.



Did you get that?

<https://youtu.be/rTNZAqfduMo>

Watch it...

<https://youtu.be/U68cIMZSgvQ>

Butts or brains

(if the statement is true... hands on head, if false...hands on butt)

- 1.Once again, God's people turned their backs on Him to worship idols so God allowed the Midianites to treat them badly for seven years.
- 2.God used the Amorites to punish Israel (Midianites)
- 3.The Israelites hid in the mountains from their enemies
- 4.The Israelites attacked their enemies (they cried out to God)
- 5.The name of the judge that God raised up was Ehud (Gideon)
- 6.Gideon was not the type of rescuer you would think God would use
- 7.God used Gideon to boost his self confidence (so that the glory would go to God)
- 8.Gideon bashed down all the idols the next morning (he went at night because he was afraid)
- 9.Gideon struggled to trust God so he did a test with God using a wool fleece
- 10.Gideon gathered together a small army (it was huge 32 000 men)

Continued on next slide

Butts or brains

11. God told Gideon his army was too big
12. 22 000 men left Gideon's army because they were scared
13. Gideon's army was reduced to 30 (300)
14. Gideon was grateful to have their swords and spears since their army was so small (they used torches, glass jars and a rams horn)
15. Gideon and his army attack early one morning (in the middle of the night they woke up the Midianites with their horn, torches and glass jars breaking)
16. Gideon's 300 men were so strong so they won the battle (they never laid a hand on them - the Midianites ran into each other and fought each other with their swords)
17. The Israelites Shouted, 'A sword for the people and for Gideon! (Shouted, 'A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!)
18. God showed his power to rescue his people by using Gideon, the most unlikely person, and a very small army to deliver them
19. Our memory verse is - The Lord is far from people and doesn't want them to call on him. (The Lord is near to all who call on him in truth.)
20. God can only use us if we are strong and powerful (To teach that God's power to save is not limited by our weakness, failure or fear.)

What's the problem?

Gideon gave each man a banana, and a jar with a bicycle light inside it. Just before breakfast time, Gideon's men crept to the edge of the enemy caravan site. They blew their flutes, and broke the vases they were holding. Then they all whispered, 'A sword for the LORD and for Gareth!. The enemy army attacked each other with spoons. And then they all roller-bladed away.

Think about it..

<https://youtu.be/fjd0or5fi1I>

Memory verse

**The Lord is near to all who call
on him in truth.**

Psalm 145:18

<https://youtu.be/Jvg038cietM>

Pray

Lord we thank you for the opportunity we have had today to learn more about you and your people. We thank you that as we read this story of Gideon we realise that no matter how weak we are you can use us for your glory. We thank you Lord that in your kindness you discipline us, not leaving us in our sin. We pray Lord that you would keep moulding our hearts and our lives so that we will day by day be showing more and more of the character of Jesus in our lives, that we would grow to hate our sin and to chase after holiness and righteousness.

Please help us Lord to trust in you. Help us Lord to remember that although the cross is a sign and symbol of weakness to the world, that it is a sign of your great power and your great love. Help us to cling to the cross of Jesus because it is there that you have given us new life - forgiveness of sins, the blessing of your Spirit and life ever lasting.

We thank you Lord for your undeserved goodness in each of our lives and we ask that our lives would reflect gratitude to you.

Amen

Did you know?

<https://youtu.be/UglrMffGH10>

Sing

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Y8s-Sz_ac

https://youtu.be/qoPcmZ7_KAg

<https://youtu.be/VTimp4l3u5s>