

# Sunday School Lesson

## GIDEON: FOLLOWING GOD'S PLAN

Judges 6:1 to 8:35; printed text, Judges 7:4-7, 15-23  
Golden Text: "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage — Jos. 1:9  
The Lesson as a Whole  
By H. A. Ironside, Litt. D.  
Pastor of Moody Memorial Church  
Approach to the Lesson:

In the Book of Judges we see how wonderful are God's resources, no matter how evil the days or how difficult the times. Conditions may be at the lowest, God's people sunk in sin and apostasy and apparently in hopeless bondage to their haughty and vindictive enemies. But whenever there was true repentance and a crying to God for deliverance, he always had the leader ready who would free them from their slavery and lead them back to himself. Of all these, none stir our hearts more as we contemplate his lowliness and yet his bravery, than Gideon, the farmer lad who was destined to save Israel from the Midianites.

The call of this young man came not when he was daydreaming, but when he was busy at his accustomed tasks on the farm of his father. He was threshing wheat to hide it from the Midianites, when the angel of the Lord appeared to him and gave him his commission to be the leader and deliverer of Israel. In "the irresistible might of weakness" Gideon ac-

cepted the trust, and began his work by destroying the image of Baal in his own community, for true service for God must begin at home.

The Historical Setting:  
For the fourth time Israel had turned to idolatry and so again become subject to an oppressive regime, their liberties destroyed by the Midianites. It was probably in or about the middle of the thirteenth century B.C. that Gideon received his call and overthrew the detested foe who had held them in bondage for seven years.

Verse by Verse  
Judges 7:4—"The people are yet too many." The people flocked to the standard of Gideon, but God was jealous for his own glory, and all the fearful were permitted to return to their homes. The throng melted away from 32,000 to 10,000. Even these were too many so Gideon was commanded to make another test in order that any not really prepared in heart might be made manifest.

Verse 5—"He brought them down to the water. The test was a remarkable one. Those who settled down to enjoy a cooling drink were to be put to one side; those who merely drank as they prepared to hasten on after the foe, on the other. Little things often indicate a man's true character.

Verse 6—"Three hundred men." These were the group who took up what they could of the water with the cupped hand and refused to be hindered in their progress by the temptation to satisfy their thirst to the full.

Verse 7—"The Lord's choice. It was God himself who in some way indicated to Gideon that he would use the devoted three hundred to defeat the Midianites. So the rest were sent home. In man's sight, Gideon's army had melted away to almost nothing. But it is not the power of the flesh or great numbers that insure victory. "The flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63.)  
Verse 15—"When Gideon heard."

The omitted verses, 8 to 14, should be carefully read; otherwise what follows will not be readily understood. Gideon and a companion spent part of a night scouting about the encampment of the Midianites. They heard one soldier tell another of a dream he had had, which seemed clearly to indicate a victory for the little Israelitish army. This so encouraged Gideon that he immediately called his company to prepare for the attack, assured that the Lord would be with them.

Verse 16—"Pitchers and lamps." Surely no other soldiers ever went to battle so strangely armed. Each man took an earthen pitcher, in which a torch was hidden. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:7). The lamp in the pitcher set forth divine power working in frail humanity. In the other hand each man held a trumpet, which was to be used only as indicated at the appointed time (See 1 Cor. 14:3).

Verse 17—"As I do, so shall ye do." It was incumbent upon all of Gideon's band to "follow the leader." They were to watch him and act accordingly.

Verse 18—"The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." The interests of the Lord were supreme in the mind of Gideon—so much so that he had no other ambition than to be an instrument in the hand of God for the deliverance of his people; therefore the aptness of the battle cry with which they were to proceed against the foe.

Verse 19—"They blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers." All was quiet in the Midianite camp, when in the middle of the night the sleeping host was awakened by the blare of three hundred trumpets by the crashing noise of the same number of earthen pitchers. On every side flashing torches were seen, which might well suggest that they were surrounded by a great host.

Verse 20—"The three companies." Gideon's little force had been divided into three groups of a hundred each, under their respective captains, and all directly responsible to their ardent and patriotic chief. As the battle cry rang out, the Midianites were terrified, not knowing what to expect next.

Verse 21—"All the host ran, and cried, and fled." The terror of the unknown, always worse than actuality, had gripped the foe and rendered them powerless for any concerted defensive or offensive action.

Verse 22—"The Lord set every man's sword against his fellow." In the confusion it was impossible for the Midianites to distinguish friend from foe, thus destroying many of their own army as they attempted to flee from the surrounding army of Israelites.

Verse 23—"The men of Israel... pursued." Word of Gideon's victory spread rapidly throughout all the country of Naphtali, Asher and Manasseh and the people generally rose up against their oppressors and drove them from their midst.

The Heart of the Lesson  
Gideon's history exemplifies the importance of obedience to the Word of God. The man of faith dares to move at God's command even though, for the moment, the difficulties seem to be insurmountable, and the possibility of victory very remote. Gideon learned to know God in secret; therefore, he ventured everything upon his Word in public.

## Toronto-Goodwood

F-L-A-S-H-E-S  
W. Davey, 8 Stanton Ave.

Tom Holland assures us he is preparing a fine program for the coming Sports Day, and when he says so there is no need to doubt so everybody look happy please until that time.

Allan Moore has been on the sick list, but we hope for him an early recovery.

Toronto folk sure enjoyed the singing by the Bethesda Quartette at the Cemetery service the other Sunday.

Will Henderson should be receiving the congratulations of his friends who are "in the know." On July 21 he celebrated another birthday. On old school master, he has many friends too and one of them is the editor of The Tribune whom he taught in third or fourth book back in Uxbridge.

We hear that Ed. Norton is in the hospital. We hope for their early recovery.

George Todd brought the first of the Goodwood potato crop to Toronto on Tuesday. We hear he was paying around \$1.25 to \$1.50 per bag for them. This first shipment of 100 bags were from his own field and that of Norman Maye and Mr. Staley's. Rev. Mr. Holmes our new United pastor at Goodwood who came here in July from Webwood was pastor at one time on the Kettleby circuit near Aurora. The writer has not got around to see the new preacher yet, but we intend to one of these days.

A car set out the other day for Chicago with a Goodwood sticker on. Yes siree, those stickers get over the country all right advertising the big sports day.

### ST. GEORGE'S SCENE OF QUIET WEDDING

A very quiet wedding was solemnized Saturday evening at St. George's church, Willowdale, when Herberta Madelin Baker, daughter of the late Mrs. Anna Mollett and the late Herbert Baker, and granddaughter of Mr. Seneca Baker, became the bride of John William Bruce, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Bruce, Thornhill. Rev. Claude Secret officiated. There were no attendants. Later, the bride and groom left on a honeymoon cruise down the St. Lawrence. They will live at Willowdale on their return.

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## Former Markham

Carpenter Marks  
82nd Birthday

One of this district's native sons gained the newspaper headlines, last week, being Daniel Hilts of Newmarket who just reached his 82nd birthday. He is one of the eldest men in that town, and the Era says: "Mr. Hilts is a carpenter by trade and not only does furniture repair jobs in his own workshop but still goes out on jobs.

Born near Victoria Square, where his grandfather came from Pennsylvania, he worked with his father on the farm until he was 25 years old. But even before he was 20 he had done quite a bit of cabinet work and it seemed to come naturally to him.

He decided to go into carpentry and learned his trade in Markham with Heise Bros., staying there four years.

Forty-seven years ago, leaving him three years short of a golden anniversary, he married Jessie Chapman of Richmond Hill, whose parents had come to this country from England.

Mr. Hilts lived in Stayner, where he built his own house, for some years, and then came to Newmarket about 30 years ago.

He is a Liberal and a member of the Brethren in Christ, although in Newmarket he and his wife usually go to the Friends church.

One sister and five brothers are living. Mrs. John Heise, Joshua, Isaac, George and David all live in the Gormley district. Levi, the youngest brother, is somewhere in the west.

Mr. and Mrs. Hilts have five sons and two daughters: Harry, California, a draftsman; Charles, Toronto, an auto mechanic; Mrs. Wm. Sprague (Annie), Aurora; Mrs. Cameron Hall (Jessie), Toronto; Wesley, Detroit, working in a furnace factory; Alex., Newmarket, Office Specialty; and Alvin, Pickering College, sculptor and artist.

Naturally Mr. Hilts is proud of the work of his son, Alvin Hilts, in designing and executing the peace memorial erected by the Newmarket Veterans. Another exceptionally fine piece of work of which his father spoke to The Era was the communion table in oak at the Christian church.

"Do you consider a trade a great advantage?" Mr. Hilts was asked.

"Yes, if I were a farmer, I would not be able to work now," he replied.

### BLAME GREEN APPLES FOR FOR NEAR-DROWNING

Georgetown, July 16—A cramp from eating green apples is blamed for the near drowning of Harld Davidson, eight, in the Credit river at Glen Williams, on Thursday night. According to his chums, the lad had been eating the apples before he started to swim in the river.

Tom Hill and Trevor Williams ran from a tennis court, dived in with their clothes on and pulled Davidson from the bottom of the river. Jack Kemshead of Georgetown rendered artificial respiration until Dr. J. H. Bate-man arrived. Davidson was reported "doing nicely."

Monster Street Dance in Stouffville this Friday night with new novel orchestra. Smooth pavement and lucky number draws, under auspices of the Stouffville War Veterans. Plan to attend.

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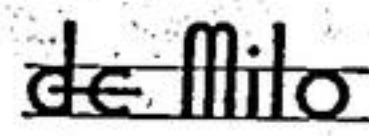
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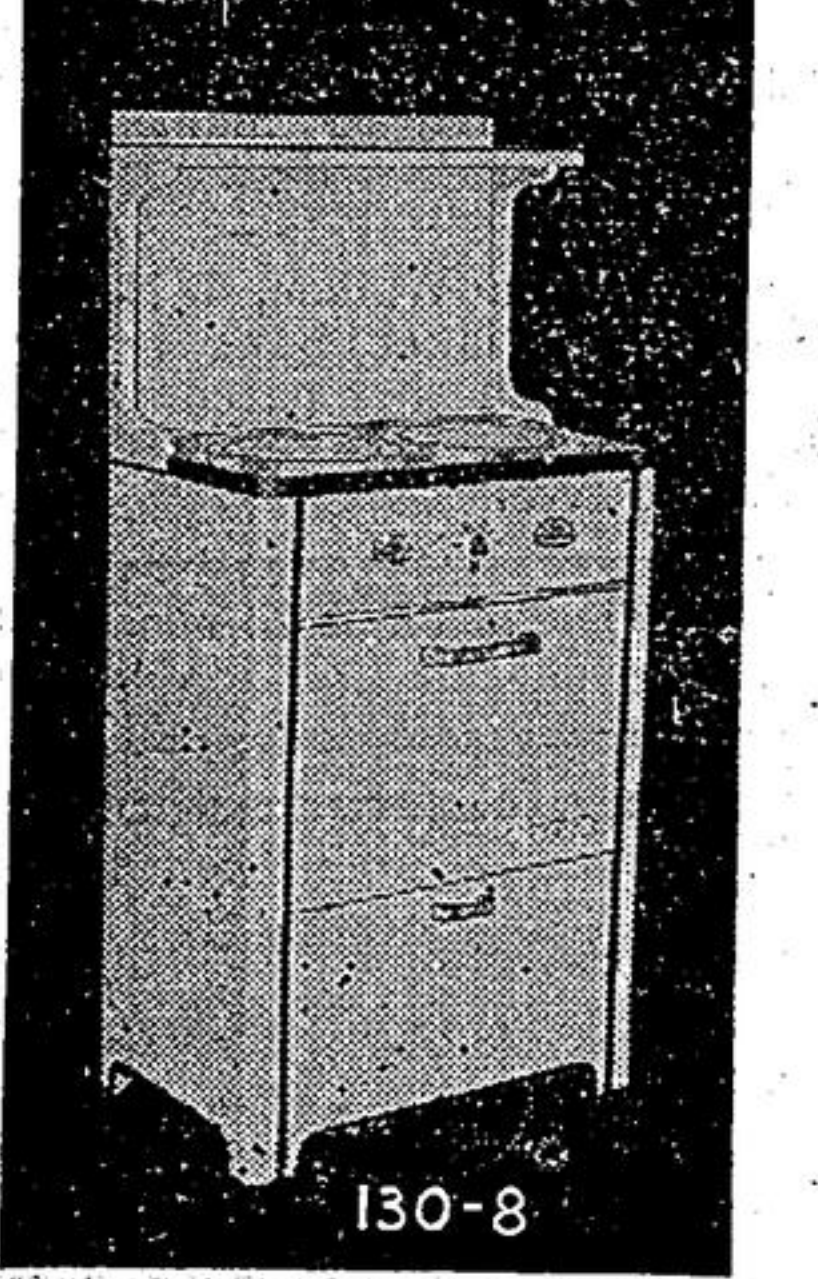
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## IRWIN RE-UNION

The fourth reunion of the Irwin family was held in Stouffville Memorial Park, on Saturday afternoon, July 16. The time was spent in renewing old acquaintances, games and races. At six o'clock the table was spread bounteously with the good things the ladies had provided. Sixty-five sat down to supper.

This group are the descendants of Samuel Irwin and Elizabeth Davis, who came from Ireland over 100 years ago, and settled at Lemonville on the farm now occupied by Stewart Rae. There were four children, three sons and one daughter, Eliza, Samuel, John and Joseph. It was the grandchildren of these sons and daughters who composed the gathering on Saturday.

Mrs. Auburn of Aurora, the oldest lady present, and eldest daughter of Joseph Irwin was accompanied by her daughter Mrs. Cosford, her granddaughter Mrs. Rank, and a great grandson Ralph Rank. The oldest gentleman in attendance was Sam Irwin of Island Lake.

Other friends present were from Detroit, Toronto, Aurora, Roches Point, Markham, Stouffville, Goodwood, Mount Albert, Unionville, Bethesda (Reach Twp.) and Island Lake.

It was decided to hold the next re-union at Toronto. The President is Clayton Paisley, Mount Albert and Clarence Stafford of Stouffville, secretary