

LESSON FIVE

LESSON NOTES FOR STD VI

JOSHUA AND THE JUDGES. – Gideon the Fearful

AIM :

General:

- 1) To tell the story of the call of Gideon: the raids of the Midianites; the angel appearing to Gideon, his hesitant and fearful response; the food offering which is burnt; destruction of Baal's altar; the laying of the fleece.
- 2) To dwell on Gideon's fear and timidity; how God encouraged him, strengthened him and gave him faith.

Personal: To encourage the children to draw on the power of the Holy Spirit when they feel afraid or timid to do what God asks of them.

STARTER: 'The Turning Wheel' Puzzle (10mins)

(First explain the puzzle to the children and then let them do it in pairs. It is better to give each child a copy, to keep as a record. Instruct them as follows:

1. Fill in the missing words in the wheel- the 5 stages.
 2. In each grid, start in the place shown and go in a continuous line, as indicated by the arrows. Fill in the names, as you find them, in the space given below. The first letter of each name is given to help you.
 3. Try and memories the names - a prize will be given to anyone who can remember the most names.
- (After the puzzle is over let the children attempt to name as many as possible. (all papers should be put away). Do not spend more than 3 minutes on this.)

INPUT: (20mins)

Today we are going to read how God called another man to be a 'judge' to, help his people in their difficulties. (Write on black-board)

JUDGE: G

FROM THE TRIBE OF: M

ENEMY: M

Can you guess who we are going to read about? (Let any volunteer complete, the names on the black board: GIDEON, MANASSEH, MIDIANITES)

Let's read the story. Pay attention, because 1 will ask anyone a question as we go along

Read: Judges Chapter 6, asking a few questions in between as follows:

Read verses 1 - 6

- How did the Midianites attack? [On camels]
- Who else came along with them? [The Amalekites]

Read verses 7 - 10

God had told the people not to do something, but they did not listen. What had He told them not to do? [Worship the Gods of the land.]

Read verses 11 - 13

- Where was Gideon threshing wheat? [In a winepress] Why? [To hide from the Midianites]

Read verses 14 – 23

- What 3 food items did Gideon make for the angel? [bread, meat, broth]
- What did Gideon name the altar? Why? ['The Lord is Peace' Because God said- 'Peace!']

Read verse 25 -- 32

- Which 2 gods' altars did Gideon destroy? [Baal's, Asherah's]
- Who defended Gideon's actions? [Joash, his father]

Read verse 33 - 35

- What happened to Gideon that gave him new courage? [The Spirit of God took control of him.]

Read verse 36 - 40

- We see Gideon putting out some wool or fleece- not a ball of wool, like you buy from the shop to knit your sweaters with, but 'fleece'- what is taken off the sheep.

ACTIVITY: (10mins)

Let us now think about Gideon- his nature, his words, and actions. What kind of a man was he when we first met him? [Afraid, timid, not ready to take up the challenge]

(Give out the activity sheets. Ask the class to search through the story and find which words or actions of Gideon show that he was weak or afraid. The words or actions which show that God encouraged him and gave him courage Let them jot down the verse numbers in their activity sheets.)

After 3-4 minutes, using the children's answers, bring out:

I. We see that Gideon was weak, afraid, timid, because-

Verse 11 and verse 27: He threshed wheat secretly and destroyed the altars of Baal and Asherah at night.

Verse 17 and 36 - 40: He asked for proof of the angel really being from God and that God was really with him.

Verse 15: He said- 'How can I be the weakest...least important member'

II. God encourage him-

1. By his words- [verse 12, 14, 16, 23) I will help you.., you will not die, brave and mighty man, etc.
2. By giving him signs- Fire, fleece. [verse 21, 36 - 40]
3. Filling him with his Spirit. [verse 34)

PRAYER: (10mins)

(Help the children to settle down and come into God's presence. Think of one thing that you feel you need to do, but feel afraid, or not good enough... maybe making friends with someone... or learning a new skill... talking in front of the class... or even walking in a dark room...)

Now listen to what St. Paul says-

God has not given us a Spirit of timidity; but a Spirit of power, and love and self control,' {2 Timothy 1: 7}

Ask the Holy Spirit, who made Gideon strong and courageous, to fill you and strengthen you.

Sing Together-

'Come .Holy & Spirit, we need You

Come, sweet Spirit we pray...

Come with your strength and your power, .

Come in your own gentle way...'

YOU WILL NEED: Good News Bibles. (full bible) / 1 puzzle per child 'The Turning Wheel' for 'Starter' / one activity sheet per child 'Gideon and God'