

LESSON SIX

LESSON NOTES FOR STD VI

JOSHUA AND THE JUDGES. – The Sword of God and Gideon

AIM :**General:**

- 1) To tell the story of Gideon and the battle against the Midianites;
 - i] Those afraid were sent back. ii.] Those who drank water directly from the stream were sent back, iii] the dream of the tent and loaf, iv] The battle- jars., trumpets and torches.
- 2) To bring out that it is not numbers that matter, but God's power.

Personal: To encourage the children to depend on God in moments of weakness or lack: to help them believe that God can work powerfully in an apparently hopeless, situation.

Texts: Judges.- Chapter 7

STARTER: (10mins)

(Draw a victory-stand on the black-board)

- What is this? [A victory stand]
- When you see it what do you think or wish ?

[Maybe- I wish I were on that stand, winning a prize!]

Let me tell you a story about a lady who also had such a wish. Her name was Mary Ellen. From the time Mary Ellen was a little girl she loved to jump and leap into the air.

Shewould spring up and down on a trampoline in the back-yardof her house. She soon learnt how, to dive and began diving in competitions for her school, college and even her state. (Mary Ellen lived in America) Her coach told her that if she trained very hard, she might even be able to take part in the Olympic games and represent her country.

Mary Ellen began training, It was very difficult, but she kept on. The high-dive platform was as high as a 3- storey building. But then, the worst thing that could happen to a diver, happened to her- she was struck with vertigo. This is a condition that suddenly makes you feel dizzy and lose your balance. Of course, with such a problem, no-one could think of diving, and specially not in a competition!

Mary Ellen was terribly upset and confused. She tried all kinds of medicines and treatment. Then one a friend of hers called Steve spoke to her on the phone. He encouraged her to accept her problem and trust in God. As she put down the phone, she remembered St. Paul's words- 'I can do all things in him who strengthens me!'

These words gave her new faith. She said to God- 'Even if I never dive again, its OK. You are there for me. I trust you !' Though her body was weak, her faith grew strong!

Mary Ellen was finally healed of her vertigo problem. In the 1996 Olympics she became the oldest diver to win an Olympic medal. She was able to beat so many stronger and younger world-class divers from all over the world.

She says- In a strange way, the vertigo has made me a better diver- calmer and more focused. Every time leap off the 33 feet platform I remember what trust and faith really mean."



INPUT: (15mins)

Mary Ellen's experience was something like Gideon's story, In today's story, Gideon also found out that God can do great things through weak people.

Last week we heard about how Gideon was called-- how fearful he was and how God encouraged him. Gideon finally acted. He sent messages and gathered men from many tribes. He had, at last, 32,000 men. But this was far less than the hundreds of thousands of Midianites. Let's read what happened next. Pay attention, because I will ask anyone a question as we go along!

Read: Judges 7: 1 - 3

How do you think Gideon felt at this point?

[Worried, maybe Wonder* what God was up to... But this was not so bad as the next step!]

Read: Judges 7: 4 - 8

I'm sure Gideon was really shaken-up by now! God realised this and so He decided to encourage him and increase his faith (Just like Mary Ellen received encouragement from [?] her friend Steve and St. Paul's words!)

Read: verses 9 - 15

So Gideon's faith became strong! He believed that God could do great things even with just 300 men. Let's read about his plan of attack.

Read: verses 16 25

Why do you think the Midianites began attacking each other? [The Midianites had been fast asleep. When Gideon's soldiers broke the jars covering the torches (these were fire torches!) suddenly they saw light appearing from nowhere, as it were. The loud cries and trumpet blasts added to their fear and confusion.]

ACTIVITY: (15mins)

(Give out one activity sheet to each child and let them work on their own. Instruct them as follows-)

1. Fill in the letters to make up the verse which inspired Mary Ellen (the wording is different in the Good News Bible, so you have to try and remember.)
2. Write Gideon's reply to a reporter as if you were Gideon. Don't worry too much about spellings.
3. Then sit for a minute in-silence, close your eyes and try and remember one time when you faced a problem (or many problems) while trying to do something... write down what happened.

PRAYER: (10 mins)

(Sit in a circle. Let the children share their experiences of facing, times of weakness.)

[Teacher could also share her experience. She then prays]

'Lord, we thank-you for what we have learnt today from Mary Ellen's experience, Gideon's story and our own stories. We thank-you for the times of weakness and helplessness we face, because these make us realise that we need you. Help us always to trust you and allow you to work. We believe that you are a great and mighty God. Amen.'

Let all repeat 2 or 3 times-

'I can do all things in Him who strengthens me.' **Philippians 4: 13**

SING: [If you know it] The Victory is Ours, When the Battle is the Lord's

YOU WILL NEED: Good News Bibles. (full bible) / Activity sheet per student