

GIDEON

Judges 6-8

Lesson Memory Verse: John 15:16 – “You have not chosen Me, but **I have chosen you**, and ordained you **that you should go and bring forth fruit**, and that your fruit should remain: that whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.” (Grades 1 & 2 memorize the part printed in bold.)

Lesson Aim: God uses people whom He chooses when they obey Him.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY: (for Attention): Try to help the children to understand that the reason why we choose some things over other things is because of their usefulness to us. That is the reason why God chooses us – that we might be useful to Him. You might illustrate this principle by the following questions:

1. Which would you choose, a pencil or a pan? Why?
2. Which would you choose, a book or a brick? Why?
3. Which would you choose, a stick or a knife? Why?
4. Which would you choose, a can or a cap? Why?

(If you can find the objects to show the children as you ask the questions, it is better.)

We choose things that can be useful to us; God also chooses things that can be useful to Him. In our memory verse for today we shall see that He chooses us for a job that He wants us to do.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse says that God has chosen us, that is, those who have received Jesus as their Savior. He has chosen us to do a job for Him. He has given them His Spirit to help them do this job. One job for choosing us is witnessing for Him so we might bring other people to Jesus for salvation. That is what is meant by the words, “That you should go and bring forth fruit.” You will please the Lord when you do the thing for which He has chosen you. In our Bible story today we will learn about several men that God chose and the job that they did for Him. It is an exciting story. Listen carefully to see if you can find out which men were chosen by God and what job they did for Him.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): **Be sure to read this story from the bible many times before reading these notes. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.** Tell the story in a natural, flowing manner and only use this outline to help you remember the different parts of the story. Feel free to eliminate parts of the story that will not be understood by your class; also eliminate any applications that are not fitting or are not important for your class.

I. Midianites against Gideon (6:1-10)

A. Midianites ruled Israel for seven years because Israel worshipped Baal instead of God (6:1, 25ff).

WE: We will be punished by God with troubles when we allow sin to stay in our lives.

B. Israelites had to live in the mountains in caves and in protected places (6:2) because they were afraid of the Midianites. They should have been afraid to sin against God and they would have been safe.

WE: We need to fear God (respect Him) and His power to punish us if we love to sin. Then we will not have to be afraid of wicked men. But if we do not fear God's power to punish us for our sins, then He will cause us to be afraid of wicked men.

C. Midianites would come into the land once a year in great numbers and would eat the best food and leave very little for the Israelites (6:3-5)

WE: We will have the best taken away from us and little left for us, when we sin against God. Sin does not bring happiness.

D. Israelites cried to God in their trouble, but they would not obey God and willingly give up their false gods (6:6-10).

WE: We can pray to God to help us, but He will not listen to us until we are ready to give up our sins.

II. Messenger to Gideon (6:11-40)

A. The messenger to Gideon was the angel of the LORD. Christ was known as the angel of the Lord before He was born in Bethlehem. He had the plan that would defeat the Midianites. He chose Gideon to be His leader to fight against the wicked Midianites (6:11-14).

WE: We must recognize that Christ is our Master and He has the perfect plan for defeating the spiritual enemies in our Christian lives. Those spiritual enemies are Satan, the sinful things that the world does and the sinful things that we do.

B. Gideon gave two excuses as to why he should not be chosen. He said that his family was poor and he was the least or youngest in his family. The LORD answered his excuses by promising to be with him and by promising he would beat the Midianites easily (6:15, 16).

WE: We must learn not to make excuses to Christ. We must learn to trust and obey Him.

C. Gideon asked two things of the LORD. First, he asked for a sign to prove God had chosen him. Second, he asked the LORD to stay until he got a meal for him. The LORD waited for the meal, which was put on a rock. This was a great sacrifice for Gideon to make because he was poor. The LORD gave Gideon a sign by causing fire to come out of the rock to burn up this precious meal. Then the angel of the LORD disappeared (6:17-21).

WE: We must remember that today Christ speaks to us from the Bible. It is not an ordinary book. It is God's Word. That should be just as exciting as when Christ spoke to Gideon.

D. Gideon did not know that he had been talking with the angel of the LORD (Christ) until He had disappeared. At first, Gideon was afraid and then he made an altar to worship the LORD in that place (6:22-24).

E. Gideon was told later that night to destroy his father's altar to Baal and to cut down the wooden female god by it. In its place, he was to build the altar to the LORD, and offer a special sacrifice upon it. Gideon did it at night. It was the beginning of the work that the LORD had chosen him to do (6:25-27).

F. The LORD protected Gideon from the men who worshipped Baal when they wanted to kill him. Instead, the LORD made him important in the eyes of Israel so that many were willing to follow him in the battle against the Midianites (6:28-35). God helped Gideon when he obeyed Him.

WE: When we obey God, He will protect us and will help us do the job that He has given us.

G. When Gideon looked at his army of 32,000 (7:3), it was good-sized until he compared them with the Midianites which numbered 135,000 (8:10). As a result, he lost his courage and asked for two more signs from God by using a fleece, that is the wool from a sheep. God was patient with Gideon and answered his requests so he would be encouraged once more (6:36-40).

III. Men with Gideon (7:1 – 8:21)

A. The LORD chose only 300 men of the 32,000 who came to help Gideon in the fight against the Midianites. He gave two tests for Gideon to use so that he would know the ones He had chosen. First, he was told to send home all the men who were **afraid** and 22,000 men left him. Second, he was told to send home all the men who drank water from the brook **carelessly** by not being alert for the enemy and 9,700 men were sent home (7:1-7).

WE: We may volunteer to serve the Lord, but He will test us to show whether He has chosen us or not. He has not chosen us if we are fearful or careless.

B. The LORD promised to save Israel from the Midianites by the 300 men whom He had chosen (7:7-8). They had proved that they were not afraid or careless.

WE: We will be used by the LORD when He has chosen us. We can be confident that He will give us the victory.

C. Then the LORD told Gideon to go down by the Midianite camp to hear what is being said about him. When he did, he heard a couple of men talking in their tent about a dream that one had. He said it was about Gideon's victory over them. This greatly encouraged Gideon (7:9-15).

WE: We will find the Lord will remove any doubts we may have when we read the Bible. We must read it to increase our faith (Rom 10:17).

D. That night Gideon and his 300 men circled the camp with some strange weapons in their hands. They had trumpets and torches in empty pitchers. At midnight they all obeyed Gideon by breaking their pitchers, holding high the torches in their left hands, blowing their trumpets that were in their right hands and shouting, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The Midianites were struck with fear and began to kill each other thinking they were the Israelites in their camp. Some Midianites tried to get back to their homeland some 150 miles away, but other tribes helped Gideon stop many of them. Before it was over 120,000 of the Midianites were killed – cf. 8:10 (7:16-25)

WE: We can have victory over doubts and lies that Satan puts in our minds. We can have victory over sins that tempt us. We can have victory over wicked people that try to draw us into sin.

E. Gideon, however, did not quit, but took his faithful 300 men and for 150 miles followed after two Midianite kings and 15,000 Midianite soldiers who escaped back to their homeland. There they captured the two kings by a surprise attack on them and their soldiers. Later Gideon killed the two kings because they had murdered his brothers (8:4-21).

WE: We must not give up when you have one victory. Instead we must keep on fighting our sins until we have complete victory over them. God will give us strength.

BE (for Action): God has chosen you to fight against Satan, against the sinful ways of the world and against sin in your life. Will you obey Him and fight these spiritual enemies? First, you must be saved. God will not choose you until you have received Jesus as your Savior. Second, you must not be afraid. Remember, the soldiers that were afraid were sent home. Third, you must not be careless. What happened to the soldiers that drank water from the brook carelessly? Fourth, you must obey exactly what the LORD says, even though you may think it is foolish. What weapons did Gideon give his 300 men? Yes, he gave them trumpets, empty pitchers and torches, but they won the battle because they obeyed. Fifth, you must not quit, but keep fighting the enemy until the victory is completely won.

If you want to be used by God to fight against your spiritual enemies, raise your hand and I will pray for you. I will be glad to talk to any of you that want to receive Jesus as your Savior, if you wait for me after the class is dismissed.