

IN HIS MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE

Agent Gideon and the Special Task Forces (STF)

Lesson 2

Teacher Preparation: For full understanding of lesson read Judges 6 – 7; 8:4, 28

Memory Verse: Psalm 56:11 – *"In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."*

Theme of lesson – Trust in God and God can use even those who are fearful

TEACHER: *Give as much detail of this lesson as possible according to the age you are teaching. Never underestimate your age group. They grasp more than you think they do. The main emphasis you need to stress is salvation, as always, and trusting in God even through your fears.*

INTRODUCTION: For many years the children of Israel had been disobedient to God. They refused to do as God had commanded them. The children were rebellious to their parents, they worshiped false gods, they were lazy when it came to going to God's house, and they didn't bother telling others about the true and living God. In short, they just lived their lives to please themselves. A child of God cannot get away with a life such as this forever. Eventually, God says, 'That is enough' and the punishment comes – just as an earthly parent does. Though God was very patient with the children of Israel, He finally allowed the punishment to come. A mighty nation, the land of Midian, became so strong that they were able to conquer the children of Israel. The Israelites became slaves to the Midianites. This bondage lasted for many years until finally God heard and answered the cry of repentance (asking forgiveness) from the Israelites. God chose a man by the name of Gideon to be the leader of an army who would conquer the Midianites and give the Israelites their freedom once again. The problem was that Gideon was a shy, fearful man to whom God had to prove that it would be God, Himself, Who would do the conquering and that Gideon had nothing to fear. Gideon had to learn the lesson of trusting in the one true God before he would ever be able to lead an army into battle. Listen as we learn about Agent Gideon and the STF.

I CHOOSING THE SPECIAL TASK FORCES (STF)

- A. Those who were fearful – GO HOME
Agent Gideon started out with an army of 32,000 men. Compared to the Midianite army, this was nothing for the Midianites had an army so huge that it could not be numbered. But, knowing God was on his side, Gideon knew that the 32,000 could be used. THEN, God told him the army was TOO BIG!!! Can you imagine???
- TOO BIG? God said to tell all those who were afraid to GO HOME. Gideon was probably a little hesitant, but he did as he was told. He announced that all men who were afraid to fight this battle could go home. Twenty-two thousand men went home! That left Gideon with only 10,000 in his army.
- B. Those who lapped water like a dog – GO HOME
Fearful Gideon realized that this army was quite a bit smaller now, but he had learned to trust God and knew God could work a miracle. Then, God said, 'It is still too big.' WHAT???
- STILL TOO BIG???
- Oh, my, now Gideon must narrow the army even more. God told him to take the men to a brook to get a drink of water. All of the men who bend down and get a drink lapping the water like a dog should go home. Only those men who reached their hand into the water and brought it to their mouth could stay. (*The reason for this was that a soldier must be on the look out for the enemy at all times and bending over drinking water blinds a soldier from looking in all directions for the enemy.*)
- When Gideon led the men to the water to get a drink, 9,700 of them lapped the water like a dog! This left Gideon with an army of only 300 men.
- C. Those who are left – STAY
Yes, now God was satisfied with the army of 300 men and Gideon. With this small band of soldiers, a faithful trusting leader – Gideon, and one Mighty God the huge army of the Midianites would be defeated. Gideon didn't know how, but he trusted that God would definitely work a miracle.

II EQUIPPING THE STF

Now was the time that all soldiers look forward to – getting their orders and their weapons. Gideon went to meet with the Lord to receive further instructions while his army of 300 anxiously waited further word. When Gideon returned, his instructions were definitely unusual for any army, but he trusted God and equipped his army.

- A. Weapons
1. Trumpets – all 300 men were equipped with a trumpet for the right hand

2. Clay pots and lanterns – all 300 men were equipped with a clay pot for the left hand and a lantern inside the clay pot.
- B. Battle Cry
- Each soldier was told the battle cry and to make sure to remember it because it would be shouted at the given time. The battle cry was – *“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon.”*

III CONQUERING THE ENEMY

These 300 soldiers must have wondered what in the world were the battle plans with weapons such as these? Being men who also trusted in God, they didn't question, but just did as they were instructed to do.

- A. Battle Plans
- Just before going out to meet the enemy that night, Gideon gave each man the detailed battle plans which God had given to him. At the given time EACH soldier was to:
1. Blow the trumpet
 2. break the clay pot
 3. hold up the lantern
 4. shout the battle cry
- B. Defeating the enemy
1. Most armies have only one trumpeter and one lantern for every so many hundreds of soldiers. The other soldiers would normally be carrying swords and other weapons. So, when the Midianites heard the trumpets ALL blow, heard the crashing of the clay pots, and saw all the lanterns, they thought there were thousands in Gideon's army. Since it was at night, they only saw the glare of the lanterns and heard the trumpets and the tremendous battle cry – *“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”* They were all so scared that they drew their swords and began waving it at anyone that came near them. In doing this, they slew their OWN army. The ones who were left thought Gideon's army was in their camp and they took off running.
 2. When the Midianites began running, Gideon and his 300 men took off after them. Though they were very tired, they pursued after them until they overtook the enemy and defeated them.

CONCLUSION: When God is in control of your life, there is never a need to fear what may happen to you. The odds may seem huge against you, but that is how God works. You

must learn to trust in the Almighty God and not be afraid of what man can do to you. The only way to have this kind of trust is to be a soldier in God's army. If you are not in God's army, you are in Satan's - the enemy's - army. To join God's army, you must first realize you are a sinner - that you have done wrong things and those are sin. Then, realize that the only way to have that sin forgiven is by asking Jesus, Who died on the cross because of your sin, to forgive you of that sin. By asking forgiveness of this sin, and asking Jesus into your heart, you are accepting Him as your Saviour. You then are a soldier in God's army and have a home waiting for you in heaven where you will live with Him forever someday. If you would like that home in heaven and want to accept Jesus as your Saviour, now is the time to do this, don't put it off. Talk to your teacher or helper today.

TEACHER: *Lead in prayer and continue this invitation as the Lord leads according to the age group you are teaching. The most important time of the lesson is RIGHT NOW. You may never have this opportunity again with these same children.*