

# Judges

## Lesson #2, Chapters 6-9

### Chapters 6-9

1. Read Chapters 6-9. After reading each chapter, briefly summarize the details of the chapter in the space below. Next, in 1-2 sentences write out the theme of the chapter. Remember, a theme is just summing up the main point or the big idea of the chapter. Then, look for a verse in that chapter that best reflects the theme of the chapter. Finally, create a 3-5 word title for the chapter.
  - a. Chapter 6 summary, theme, key verse, and title.
  - b. Chapter 7 summary, theme, key verse, and title.
  - c. Chapter 8 summary, theme, key verse, and title.
  - d. Chapter 9 summary, theme, key verse, and title.

### Chapter 6

Note: Gideon's home was in Ophrah which is west of the Jordan River up near the Sea of Galilee.

2. Chapter 6 verse 1 begins, *Then the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord gave them into the hands of Midian seven years.* What was life like for the Israelites during this time according to 6:2-6? How did the Lord respond to the sons of Israel as they cried out to Him in their sorrow (6:8-10)?

3. Who appears to Gideon in 6:11-18? Does Gideon immediately understand who he is talking to? What happens that changes Gideon's understanding of who his visitor really is in 6:11-24?
4. How is Gideon described in 6:11-18?
5. What does the Lord command Gideon to do and how does he go about it in 6:25-27? How does this fit with Gideon's description of himself?
6. Gideon's father stands between the crowd and his son. What wise counsel does he give to the mob (6:28-32)?
7. Gideon is famous for his fleece test. Why does he want to test God in this way (6:33-40)? What is Gideon trying to discover in his little test (6:36)?

### Chapter 7

8. Gideon's army is quickly gathered, but God has some changes to make. Why (7:2)? What is the Lord's solution to this problem (7:3-8)?
9. How does the Lord strengthen Gideon in 7:9-14?
10. God's encouragement does its work and Gideon is emboldened to proceed against the Midianites. What are the details of this unique battle (7:15-25)? Is it successful (see also 8:10)?

Chapter 8

11. In 7:24-25 Gideon calls the men of Ephraim to come and help him in the battle. Though they help in battle they are not happy with Gideon. Why (8:1)? How does Gideon calm them down (8:2-3)?

Note: Succoth and Penuel are located on the east side of the Jordan River. Penuel is near the Jabbok River. Penuel is where Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord, seeking to be blessed, before his meeting with his estranged brother, Esau.

12. What obstacles does Gideon encounter as he pursues the fleeing Midianites? See 8:4-12.
13. Rather than allowing God to deal out consequences to the inhospitable inhabitants of Succoth and Penuel, Gideon takes matters into his own hands. What does he do (8:7-17)?
14. The sons of Israel want to make Gideon king over them. How does he respond to that tempting offer (8:22-24)?
15. What is an ephod? See Ex. 28:6-12; Judges 8:26-27; 17:5; 1Chron. 15:27; and Hosea 3:4. After looking up the preceding verses, consider how the ephod that Gideon made would become a snare to him, his household, and the people?
16. What things did Israel forget about in 8:33-35? What were the results of their forgetfulness?

17. Gideon can be a frustrating man to study. One moment he seems to be trusting in the Lord and the next moment he is being rash and impetuous. List the high points of his life from these chapters and then list the low points. How is his life an encouragement and/or a warning for you?
  
18. What words of wisdom would you share with Gideon (or someone like him) that would help him to walk with the Lord in obedience and faithfulness?

Chapter 9

19. Who is Abimelech and what plan does he promote and carry out? See 8:29-31 and 9:1-6.
  
20. Gideon's only surviving son, Jotham, confronts the men of Shechem with a parable in 9:7-15. Who is the bramble and what kind of ruler would he be to the people?
  
21. What curse does Jotham pronounce against the people and Abimelech in 9:16-20?
  
22. How does 9:57 sum up the rest of the events of the chapter in light of Jotham's curse?

### Thoughts to Ponder

In her little book, *Kept for the Master's Use*, hymn-writer Frances Ridley Havergal says: "Of ourselves we may have but little weight, no particular talents or position or anything else to put into the scale, but let us remember that again and again God has shown that the influence of a very average life, when once really consecrated to Him, may outweigh that of almost any number of merely professing Christians. Such lives are like Gideon's three hundred, carrying not even the ordinary weapons of war, but only trumpets and lamps and empty pitchers, by whom the Lord wrought great deliverance, while He did not use the others at all. For He hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty."

Dwight L. Moody noted, "It is observable that God has often called men to places of dignity and honor when they have busy and honest employment of their vocation. Saul was seeking his father's donkeys and David his father's sheep when called to the Kingdom. The shepherds were feeding their flocks when they had their glorious revelation. God called the four apostles from their fishing and Matthew from collecting taxes, Amos from the horsemen of Tecoah, Moses from keeping Jethro's sheep, Gideon from the threshing floor, Elisha from the plows. God never called a lazy man. God never encourages idleness and will not despise persons in the lowest employment."