

# People God Used

**Lesson 23a — Gideon**

**Lesson 23b — Ruth**

**Lesson 23c — Samson**

**Lesson 23d — Esther**

## OVERVIEW

The emphasis of our next series of four lessons is “People God Used.” Each of the lessons is a complete story in itself, but the characters are tied together by a common theme — that they were used by God to accomplish a specific purpose.

You will notice that the four people selected for study were not necessarily “heroes” in that their lives exemplified every aspect of Christian perfection. We do not know a great deal about the personal characteristics of either Ruth or Esther, and yet we know that God used them. We see the imperfections in Samson’s history, and yet God was able to use him also.

What was it that made these people the ones God chose to use? Each of them had something that qual-

ified them. As we study each lesson, we would like to zero in on the one quality which seems to stand out in the person’s character. For Gideon, we will consider courage; for Ruth, a follower after God; for Samson, strength; and for Esther, unselfish regard for others.

As your students learn about these Bible characters, encourage them to think about the qualities God might be looking for in us today. They should see that He still uses people to fulfill many of His purposes. Even though the need may not be to lead an army into battle, or to pull down pillars of a great building, God has something for each one to do who is willing to be used of Him. Be sure to spend some time talking about the things a child of this age can do for the Lord, and how he can have the qualities in his life that God can use.

## GAMES FOR REVIEW

Write out short sentences, phrases, or words on separate squares of paper regarding each person God used and also the persons’ names on separate pieces. Hand out to each student. Have a child say a name of one of the people if that child has the name piece. Then ask if anyone has a paper that says what that person did. There can be more than one answer. Or vice versa — have a child read one deed and have the child with the corresponding name reply.

Divide your group into teams. For each team, make a set of cards on which you have written the words (or short phrases) of the four memory verses for this unit. Spread the cards out on the floor in front of your group, or place them all on a table. At a signal, each team sends one member up to find a word or phrase of a verse. That player brings back the first word and places it on the floor. The next player goes forward and finds

the second word. The game continues until one team succeeds in arranging all four verses in the correct order.

Let the children have a story hunt. Divide them into two teams. Name one of the stories in this unit and have each student try to find the story in the Bible (you might want to tell them which book of the Bible it is in). The first one to locate it scores for his or her team. Do this with each story in this unit.

Set up a board with approximately 16 pegs on it (this will depend on the number of riddles you use). Attach a riddle to each peg. Use an even amount for each lesson in the unit. They might read something like, “Early one morning I was dry but the ground was wet — what am I?” “I was cut off while Samson slept — what am I?” “I was invited to eat with Queen Esther — who am I?” “I went to live with my mother-in-law — who am I?” Some

key words for each lesson might be, Gideon, pitchers, trumpets, Moab, Naomi, Bethlehem, Samson, strong, blind, Esther, banquet, Mordecai. Choose up sides in the department and let the students take turns tossing a large ring at the pegs. They must answer the riddle attached to the peg where their ring lands.

## CONTEST IDEAS

Put a shield (see Patterns) on the bulletin board. Put each child's name on one of the crown points. Every time a child says the memory verse, brings lesson book, brings a friend, etc., have the child put a foil star on his crown point.

Cut out 4-inch stars for your students (see Patterns). On the first Sunday, let each of them write their name on a star and attach the star to a bulletin board. Have several red, white, and blue strips of paper (1x3 inches) that are labeled: attendance, memory verse, etc. Each week let the children add the strips they have earned to the bottom of the star. Alternate the colors.

Before you start this newspaper contest, give each of your students a pocket folder — made from a 9x12 inch sheet of construction paper which has been folded in half and stapled or taped at the sides. Title the folder, "What's the News?" Cut a newspaper into 4x6 inch pieces. In the center of each one attach a piece of scratch pad paper that is approximately 2x4 inches. Label the pieces of paper: attendance, missionary, memory verse, etc. Each week give the students the awards they have earned. Have enough ready for all your students in case they all win the maximum. At the end of the unit the winner is the one with the most "News."

## BULLETIN BOARDS

Make a large shield on colored paper. Print PEOPLE GOD USED and draw a crown on the shield. Draw as many points on the crown as there are children in the class.

Title your board "A Tool God Can Use." Make the focus of your board a large open tool box (see Patterns). Arrange a number of tools around it, with each tool having the name of one of your students or one of the Bible

characters studied in this unit. (This board would be especially appropriate for a class of boys.)

Make the "People God Used" bulletin board using four different colors of paper (see Patterns). Use a fifth color of ribbon to divide the sections. Label each section with the virtue of each of the persons shown.

The "Can God Use You?" bulletin board personalizes the board for your class because the children's names and talents are used (see Patterns). Make the background blue and the hills in shades of green. The stars can be all yellow or you might enjoy using a variety of colors to brighten the board. Make sure the stars are large enough for the writing to be seen. The writing, of course, will be the children's names and their talents.

## UNIT SONGS

"Stand Fast Therefore in the Liberty"

"My God Is So Great, So Strong and So Mighty"

"They That Wait Upon the Lord"

## CHART IDEAS

Make the star chart for each child (see Patterns). Use various colors of paper for your class: red for Sally, blue for Johnny, etc. Label the sections as shown. Make the stars of contrasting colors and let the children add their stars each week to the appropriate square.

Use a wheel chart or even cards on which you have written the name of a person God used. Use a wheel chart that has words on it, "I want to be like . . ." and have the student turn the wheel to the character they want to be like. Use the chart to provoke discussion with each student on why they want to be like that person.

Make four "Blue Ribbons" for the people for this quarter. Cut a medallion from red construction paper, a smaller yellow circle, and ribbons from blue. In the center of each, print the name of one of the heroes. The red and blue could be made from satin ribbon and the center from gold foil.

## UNIT SUPPORT MATERIAL

Miracles of the Old Testament — Classroom Activity Book, 8 each of 6 pictures, Standard Publishing