

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



JERICHO JOSHUA

📖 **Joshua 6:1-11,15-16,20,24,27** The fall of Jericho

🎯 **Aim: To know what happened after Moses died**

In today's session we continue our journey through the wilderness with the Israelites. Sadly, Moses died, and God appointed a new leader, Joshua. The people reached the towering walls of Jericho, but it seemed impossible to get into the city. God gave Joshua specific instructions, and with the Ark of the Covenant taking centre stage, the city was defeated. God reassured Joshua and the people that his strength was always with them, and the same promise is available to us.

Each child will need:

- Bible verse wristband
- Pens/pencils and paper
- Party blowers (optional)
- Three sheets of A4 white paper, two wooden chopsticks, scissors, glue, sticky tape
- A brick-shaped piece of card – see Pray It
- Explore It Ideas handout

You will need:

- To watch *Joshua & Battle of Jericho* - BibleCraft by TNG Kids (5:48)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBcd5dP2W9g (optional) – see Action It
- Blu-tak and space to build a prayer wall – see Pray It

Start It

Ask the children to imagine that they are the mayor of a city or town (it can be the place where they live). Tell them they have been given the job of creating a wall to protect the city. Give each child a piece of paper and ask them to design the perfect wall to surround their town or city. They can add extra protective features if they would like. Encourage them to be creative.

Share the ideas together. Later in the session, the children will discover how the walls of Jericho fell down following the marching and shouts of the people. You could refer back to this activity to see if any of their walls offered protection from loud noises!

If the children need ideas of what a walled city looks like, then an optional video clip is provided below. (Perhaps some children have seen city walls, even in the UK.)

Video

Top 22 Most Impressive Walled Cities in the World by GrazieVlog Ph (2:54)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uweHpWfc-o

Sing It

🗣️ **Say:** This month we are continuing the story of the Israelites. At this point in the story Moses had died and God had appointed a new leader, Joshua. Our memory verse for this month is the words God said to Joshua when he became the leader of the Israelites.

Give each child a wristband and share the memory verse together.

Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

Say: Each week we will learn a different song that helps us to remember our memory verse.

'Memory verse song – Joshua 1:9' by Hillsong Kids (1:48)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iyp7WNusPDg

Tell It

Say: In our *Explore It* sessions last month we followed Moses and the Israelites as God guided them through the wilderness. God gave the Israelites special rules to follow called the Ten Commandments. The rules were written on two stone tablets.

Ask: What did God ask the people to build to carry the stone tablets?

Say: As we continue our journey with the Israelites, the Ark of the Covenant plays an important part in the story. Moses continued to lead the people but sadly died before they reached the Promised Land. The people needed a new leader, and that's what our story is all about today.

Video

The Walls of Jericho – Stories of the Bible by Saddleback Kids (3:15)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAv9rZl2U5g

Discuss:

- ➔ Who did Joshua send to check out what was happening in Jericho? Who helped them stay safe while they were there?
- ➔ In the Israelite camp, Joshua was visited by the Commander of the Army of the Lord. What message did he have for Joshua?
- ➔ What did God tell Joshua and his soldiers to do?
- ➔ What part did the Ark of the Covenant play in the march? Why do you think it had such an important part to play?
- ➔ What happened as the people shouted and marched around the city walls?

Read the following Scripture from Joshua 6:1-11,15-16. At the appropriate part in the story, encourage the children to march around the room seven times. If you are feeling particularly brave, you could give each child a party blower to make as much 'trumpet noise' as possible while they march.

Read:

'Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.'

'Then the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in."

'So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant of the Lord and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it." And he ordered the army, "Advance! March around the city, with an armed guard going ahead of the ark of the Lord."

'When Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets before the Lord went forward, blowing their trumpets, and the ark of the Lord's covenant followed them. The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew

the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding. But Joshua had commanded the army, “Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!” So he had the ark of the Lord carried around the city, circling it once. Then the army returned to camp and spent the night there.’

— (Joshua 6:1-11 *NIV*)

‘On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times. The seventh time round, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!”’

— (vv15-16 *NIV*)

After reading the story, discuss with the children why they think the walls came tumbling down. Did it happen because the Israelites made a lot of noise? Explain to the children that it was through God’s strength that Joshua and the people were able to defeat the Israelites.

Action It

Say: Today you will make your own mini version of the story of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho.

The following clip explains how to create a mini version of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho. It can be used with the whole group to explain the activity or to provide instructions for the group leader to share with the children.

Video

Joshua & Battle of Jericho – BibleCraft by TNG Kids (5:48)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBcd5dP2W9g

Pray It

Say: Our memory verse for this month reminds us that God is with us wherever we go. Let’s share it again together.

‘Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.’

— (Joshua 1:9 *NIV*)

Say: Because we have this assurance that God is with us, we can turn to him whenever we feel afraid. We don’t need to be strong on our own as we can rely on God’s strength.

Ask the children to think of a situation where they need God’s strength. Discuss ideas together as a group. Give each child a brick-shaped piece of card. The children can use the card to write a prayer asking God for his help and strength in this situation. When the children have finished their prayers, then build a prayer wall using all of their bricks. Bring the time of prayer to a close. If required, the following piece of music can be used while the children write their prayers. The children don’t need to watch the clip; it can be used as background music.

Listen

‘Be strong’ – Joshua 1:9 by Truth Songs (2:43)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHU64CryLog

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home

SEPTEMBER
SESSION 01

JERICHO JOSHUA

 Joshua 6:1-11,15-16,20,24,27 The fall of Jericho

© Aim: To know what happened after Moses died

FOR ME



Discover

Watch this clip which retells the story of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho in a totally different way.

How could you retell the story?

Jericho (Re-visited) by Chicago Staff Band

www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkZFrXuURIk

TOGETHER



Share

In today's Explore It session, you created your own mini version of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho. Using your creation, tell the people at home the story of Joshua and the Israelites as they defeated the city of Jericho.



Song for the week

'Memory verse song – Joshua 1:9' by Hillsong Kids

www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyp7WNusPDg



Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

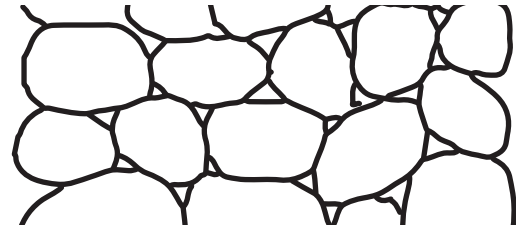
— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

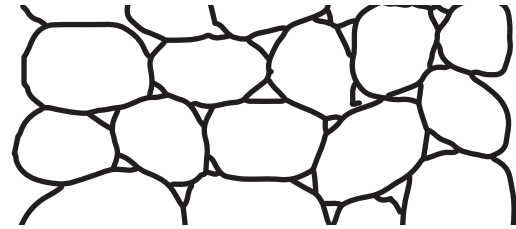
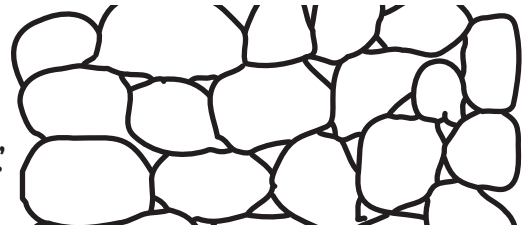
<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

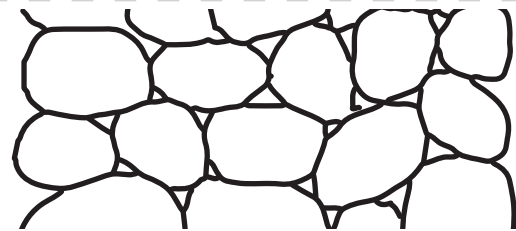
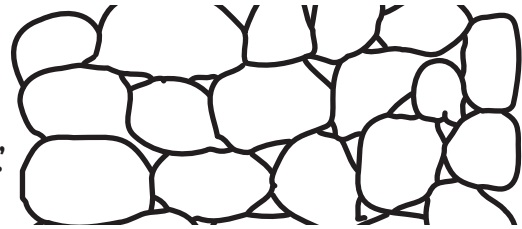




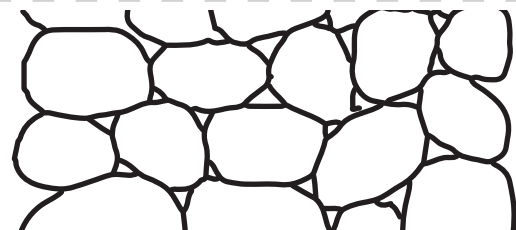
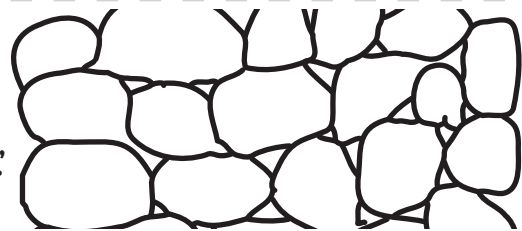
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(Joshua 1:9)



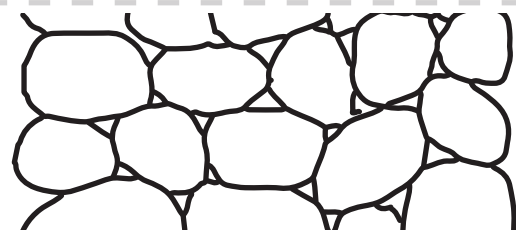
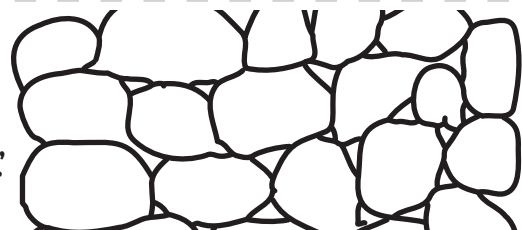
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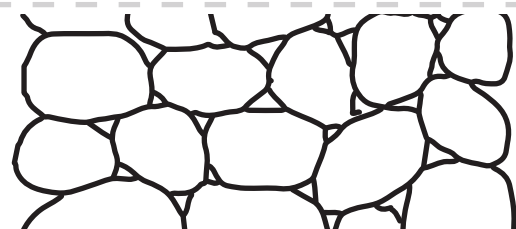
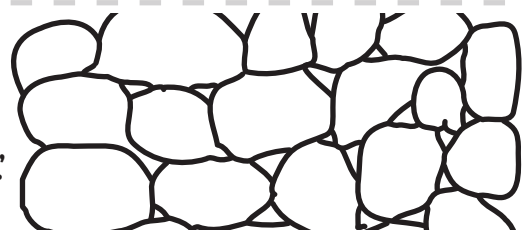
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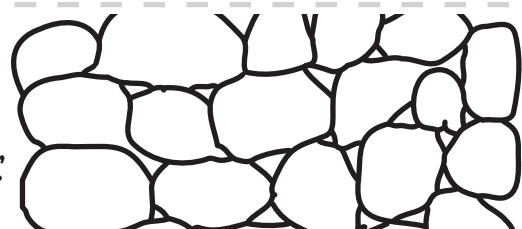
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Explore It

FOR LEADERS



HERO GIDEON

Judges 6:12-16; 7:19-21 The angel of the Lord visits Gideon

Aim: To learn about how God uses people

The story of the Israelites continues in our session today as we meet Gideon. God chose him to be the right man to lead the Israelites, but Gideon wasn't so sure. His story shows us that God can use every single one of us to make a difference in the world.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- Explore It Ideas handout

You will need:

- A blindfold and objects to create an obstacle course
- Gideon story statements – you may wish to have two sets using two different colours – see Action It

Start It

Say: In today's story our Bible character has to trust God with an uncertain future.

Ask:

- How good are you at trusting other people?
- How do you decide whether someone can be trusted?

Say: Our starter today is a game where trust is essential.

Set up a mini obstacle course. Ask for two volunteers; one will be blindfolded and led through the obstacle course by the other. Discuss what was challenging about the task and whether the children found it easy or challenging to trust each other.

Sing It

Say: Last week we heard the story of Joshua, a confident and brave leader. This week we meet Gideon. Gideon was not sure that God had chosen the right person to lead. He needed regular reminders that God was with him. Let's share our memory verse together to remind ourselves that we do not need to be afraid as Gideon was.

Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

Say: Our song for today helps us to remember our memory verse.

'Be strong and courageous – Joshua 1:9' (hand motions) by Seeds Family Worship (3:15)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU45XTawnSY

Tell It

Say: Towards the end of his life Joshua tried his best to keep the Israelites on track. The Israelites had a habit of promising to trust in God but then they would turn away from him and worship the gods of the other nations. God would punish the Israelites for their disobedience and then they would promise to do the right thing. But after a while, they'd forget about their promise and the cycle would start all over again.

Ask:

- Why do you think the Israelites kept going round and round in circles?
- Have you ever felt like you can't break a habit you know isn't good for you? Share your experience.

Say: After Joshua had died God gave the Israelites people to lead them called the 'judges'. They were not like the judges we see in court today; they were more like political and tribal leaders. Before Gideon, the character we will learn about today, there was Othniel, Ehud and Deborah. Despite their leadership, the Israelites kept getting themselves into trouble. Let's watch the clip to find out what happened.

Video

God's Story: Gideon by Crossroads Kids' Club (4:20)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=U68cIMZSgvQ

Watch: 0:00 to 0:49. (God said he was going to free the Israelites with Gideon's help.)

Discuss:

- What mistakes did the Israelites keep making?
- How did God punish the Israelites?
- Once the seven years of punishment were over, who did God come to visit? What did he have to say to a very surprised Gideon?

Say: We can find out more about what God had to say to Gideon in the book of Judges in the Old Testament.

Read:

'The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior!"

'Then Gideon said, "Pardon me, sir. If the Lord is with us, why are we having so many troubles? Our ancestors told us he did miracles. They told us the Lord brought them out of Egypt. But now he has left us. He has allowed the Midianites to defeat us."

'The Lord turned to Gideon and said, "You have the strength to save the people of Israel. Go and save them from the Midianites. I am the one who is sending you."

'But Gideon answered, "Pardon me, Lord. How can I save Israel? My family group is the weakest in Manasseh. And I am the least important member of my family."

'The Lord answered him, "I will be with you. It will seem as if you are fighting only one man."

— (Judges 6:12-16 *ICB*)

Ask: We have already shared our memory verse together today. What is its main message?

Say: Gideon grew up hearing the words God said to Joshua. He knew God had promised to be with his people, but it really didn't feel like he was. Gideon asked, 'If the Lord is with us, why are we having so many troubles?'

Ask:

- Why do you think Gideon felt this way?
- In what way was it difficult for Gideon to trust God when he felt that everything was going wrong?

Say: Gideon needed to be certain that God was on his side.

Watch: 0:50 to 1:26. (So he called together an army to fight against the Midianites.)

Ask: In what different ways did God show Gideon he was with him?

Watch: 1:27 to 2:43. (That could only mean that Gideon would triumph over the Midianites.)

Discuss:

- Why did God reduce the number of soldiers going into battle?
- How many soldiers actually went with Gideon into battle?
- One of the Midianite soldiers was heard sharing a crazy dream. What was it, and what did it mean?

Watch: 2:44 to 4:20.

Ask:

- What unusual objects did the Israelites use in the battle?
- What happened?

Say: By the end of the story it was clear that, even when Gideon doubted God's presence, God was always there with him. Throughout the story, God used unexpected people, circumstances and objects to achieve his purposes. The same is true today. Remember that God can use anyone to do amazing things in his name.

Action It

Stick up the *Gideon Story Statements* or hide them around the room. Ask the children to collect the sentences and then put them into the correct order. If you would like to divide the group into teams, print two sets of sheets on two different colours.

1. Israel turned away from God.
2. God reminded them he was in charge.
3. God said he would save Israel and would use Gideon.
4. God performed miracles for Gideon.
5. Gideon gathered an army and God made it smaller ... much smaller!
6. The Midianite soldiers had a dream.
7. Gideon's army surprised their enemies.
8. The Midianites ran away, and God used Gideon to save Israel.

Review the sequence with the whole group and encourage them to retell the story as you work through the statements together.

Pray It

Say: When he looked at the situation around him, Gideon was unsure that God was with him and needed reassurance.

Ask: Do you ever feel uncertain that God is with you? Can you describe why you sometimes feel that way?

Say: For our prayer time today we are going to sing a song that reminds us that we do not need to be afraid or worried about what is happening in the world. Just like Gideon, God is with us, and he works in unexpected and amazing ways.

Video

'Fear not' – official lyric video by Ellie Holcomb (3:00)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDNIFzcqjng

When the song has finished, bring the Explore It session to a close with a prayer.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home

SEPTEMBER
SESSION 02

HERO GIDEON

 Judges 6:12-16; 7:19-21 The angel of the Lord visits Gideon

© Aim: To learn about how God uses people

FOR ME



Create

Use the following outline of Gideon's story to create your own comic strip.

1. Israel turned away from God.
2. God reminded them he was in charge.
3. God said he would save Israel and would use Gideon.
4. God performed miracles for Gideon.
5. Gideon gathered an army and God made it smaller ... much smaller!
6. The Midianite soldiers had a dream.
7. Gideon's army surprised their enemies.
8. The Midianites ran away, and God used Gideon to save Israel.

TOGETHER



Share

Share Gideon's story with the people at home and watch the clip together.

What one thing did you all learn from Gideon's story?

The Story of Gideon (SFX) Bible Story by Kids on the Move

www.youtube.com/watch?v=za8SG8_bWsM&t=68s



Song for the week

'Be strong and courageous – Joshua 1:9'
(hand motions) by Seeds Family Worship (3:15)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU45XTawnSY



Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Israel turned away from God.



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 2 *Explore It*

**God reminded them
he was in charge.**



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 2 *Explore It*

**God said he would
save Israel and
would use Gideon.**



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 2 *Explore It*

God performed miracles for Gideon.



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 2 *Explore It*

**Gideon gathered an
army and God made
it smaller ... much
smaller!**



The Midianite soldiers had a dream.



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 2 *Explore It*

**Gideon's army
surprised their
enemies.**



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 2 *Explore It*

**The Midianites ran
away, and God used
Gideon to save
Israel.**



Explore It

FOR LEADERS



TEMPLE-TOPPLING SAMSON

📖 Judges 13:1,3-5,24-25; 14:10-19; 16:4-6,16-21

🎯 **Aim:** To think about strength and how we use it

In today's session we meet a Bible character gifted with immense strength from God. The only problem was that he didn't always use this strength wisely. He had amazing physical strength, but it would be fair to say that he often showed a weakness of character.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils, paper, and other resources to respond creatively – see Action It
- Explore It Ideas handout

You will need:

- Either the Strength Bible verses or the Strength Bible references handout – see Action It

Start It

💬 **Say:** Our Bible character today used riddles to annoy his enemies. Unlike the character in our story, I'm not trying to annoy you, but I thought it would be fun if we tried to solve some riddles together.

Choose from the selection of riddles below and see how many the children can solve.

- What is yours but is mostly used by others? Your name.
- What word begins with E and ends with E, but only has one letter? Envelope
- If you drop me, I'm sure to crack, but smile at me and I'll smile back. What am I? A mirror
- What has hands and a face, but can't hold anything or smile? A clock
- I'm as light as a feather, yet the strongest person can't hold me for five minutes. What am I? Your breath.

Sing It

💬 **Say:** If anything, our Bible character for today was too strong. Rather than relying on God's strength, he became confident in his own. Our memory verse for this month reminds us that our strength comes from God.

Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

'Motions (Joshua 1:9)' by Saddleback Kids (1:55)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=asjSnNgDTrw

Tell It

Say: Today we get to meet another one of the judges appointed by God to lead his people. Unfortunately, the Israelites still hadn't learned how to follow God. In Judges 13:1 (ICB) we read:

'Again the people of Israel did what the Lord said was wrong. So he let the Philistines rule over them for 40 years.'

Ask: Why do you think God let the Philistines defeat the Israelites?

Say: We can discover more about our Bible character for today by turning to Judges 13, where we meet Manoah and his wife.

Read:

'The angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife. He said, "You have not been able to have children. But you will become pregnant and have a son! Don't drink wine or beer. Don't eat anything that is unclean. You will become pregnant and have a son. You must never cut his hair because he will be a Nazirite*. He will be given to God from birth. He will begin the work of saving Israel from the power of the Philistines.'"

— (Judges 13:3-5 ICB)

* A Nazirite was a person set aside to serve God. Not cutting his hair was a way of showing this to other people.

Ask: We purposefully haven't mentioned the name of our Bible character for today yet. Who do you think it is?

Read:

'So the woman gave birth to a boy. She named him Samson. Samson grew, and the Lord blessed him. The Spirit of the Lord began to work in Samson.'

— (Judges 13:24-25 ICB)

Say: Samson was special to God and was set apart to do amazing things. Through God's power, Samson was very strong. The problem was that even though Samson was physically strong, he didn't show much strength of character.

Ask: What do you think the phrase 'strength of character' means?

Say: Samson liked to get his own way and often used his strength to make unreasonable demands. When he wanted to marry a Philistine woman, his parents pointed out that it wasn't a good idea to be joined with the enemy, but Samson insisted. Let's turn to the book of Judges to find out what happened.

Read:

'Samson's father went down to see the Philistine woman. The custom was for the bridegroom to give a feast. So Samson gave a feast. When the people saw him, they sent 30 men to be with him.'

'Then Samson said to the 30 men, "Let me tell you a riddle. This feast will last for seven days. Try to find the answer during that time. If you can, I will give you 30 linen shirts. I will also give you 30 changes of clothes. But if you can't tell me the answer, you must pay me. You must give me 30 linen shirts and 30 changes of clothes.'"

'So they said, "Tell us your riddle. We want to hear it.'"

'Samson said, "Out of the eater comes something to eat. Out of the strong comes something sweet.'"

'The 30 men tried for three days to figure it out. But they could not find the answer.'

'On the fourth day, they came to Samson's wife. They said, "Did you invite us here to make us poor? Trick your husband into telling us the answer to the riddle. If you don't, we will burn you and everyone in your father's house!"'

'So Samson's wife went to him and began crying. She said, "You hate me! You don't really love me! You told my people a riddle, but you won't tell me the answer.'"

'Samson said, "I haven't even told my father or mother. Why should I tell you?"'

'Samson's wife cried for the rest of the seven days of the feast. So he finally gave her the answer on the seventh day. [The answer was a lion and honey – see vv5-9.] He told her because she kept bothering him. Then she told her people the answer to the riddle.'

— (Judges 14:10-17 ICB)

Ask:

→ How did Samson's wife make him reveal the answer to the riddle?

→ Do you think Samson showed strength or weakness in this situation? Explain your answer.

💬 **Say:** We don't have time to go into the whole story now, but Samson repeatedly showed that he was unable to do the right thing. He gave in if people pestered him and would fly into an angry rage when he wanted to get revenge.

Ask: Would you like to have Samson as a friend? Explain your answer.

💬 **Say:** Despite Samson's obvious flaws, God still tried to use him to defeat the Philistines eventually. Samson was a tribal leader for Israel, he judged Israel, for 20 years – and then he met Delilah!

Video

Samson and Delilah by Saddleback Kids (5:00)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcTgzQAeuZo

Ask: Why did Samson give away the secret of his strength?

💬 **Say:** Samson was easily defeated by Delilah's nagging. Although she tricked him repeatedly, he showed a weakness in his character and gave in to her demands.

💬 **Say:** Samson forgot that his strength came from the Lord, and ultimately it was his downfall.

Action It

Depending on your group you can either show the references or display the full verses. Place the following Strength Bible verses or references around the room, ideally before your session begins.

Using the Bible references and ideas discussed in the session, ask the children to create their own representation of what it means to be strong. They could create a word picture, painting, poem, song or anything else that helps them to understand how the Bible represents strength.

For example, they could create an acrostic poem for the words: STRENGTH, STRONG, or SAMSON. They could draw the outline of the word STRONG and then surround or fill it with words and phrases that represent biblical strength. The aim is for the children to be creative, but these ideas should get them started.

Strength Bible verses

'Be strong and brave. Don't be afraid of them. Don't be frightened. The Lord your God will go with you. He will not leave you or forget you.'

— (Deuteronomy 31:6 ICB)

'But the people who trust the Lord will become strong again.

They will be able to rise up as an eagle in the sky.

They will run without needing rest.

They will walk without becoming tired.'

— (Isaiah 40:31 ICB)

'I can do all things through Christ because he gives me strength.'

— (Philippians 4:13 ICB)

'The Lord gives me strength and makes me sing.

He has saved me.

He is my God,

and I will praise him.

**He is the God of my ancestors,
and I will honour him.'**

— (Exodus 15:2 *ICB*)

**'So don't worry, because I am with you.
Don't be afraid, because I am your God.
I will make you strong and will help you.
I will support you with my right hand that saves you.'**

— (Isaiah 41:10 *ICB*)

'Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his great power.'

— (Ephesians 6:10 *ICB*)

**'Depend on the Lord and his strength.
Always go to him for help.'**

— (1 Chronicles 16:11 *ICB*)

**'God did not give us a spirit that makes us afraid. He gave us a spirit of power and love
and self-control.'**

— (2 Timothy 1:7 *ICB*)

Pray It

💬 Say: Samson was physically strong, but he didn't always use his strength in the best way. Sometimes we can find it difficult to talk about our strengths, though Samson didn't have this problem! God wants to use our strengths every single day to make a difference in his world.

Discuss

Discuss together the strengths of each of the children. They may not be able to identify their own strengths, so encourage them to share ideas with each other.

Discuss how God could use each of their strengths to make a difference in their family and community. After the discussion, spend time thanking God for the children's strengths and ask God to use each one of them to make a difference in the world.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home

SEPTEMBER
SESSION 03

TEMPLE-TOPPLING SAMSON

📖 Judges 13:1,3-5,24-25; 14:10-19; 16:4-6,16-21

🎯 Aim: To think about strength and how we use it

FOR ME



Discover

International Peace Day is celebrated across the world on Thursday 21 September this year. See if you can discover what it is all about.

Samson didn't always use his strength wisely, but how could you use your strengths to bring peace to others?

TOGETHER



Encourage

Sometimes we can find it difficult to see our strengths and need a little encouragement from others. Think about each person at home. What are their strengths?

Take the time to encourage everyone at home by reminding them of their strengths and how God wants to use them to make a difference in the world.



Song for the week

'Motions (Joshua 1:9)' by Saddleback Kids (1:55)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=asjSnNgDTrw



Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



**‘Be strong and brave.
Don’t be afraid of them.
Don’t be frightened.
The Lord your God will go with
you.
He will not leave you or forget
you.’**

(Deuteronomy 31:6)



‘But the people who trust the Lord will become strong again. They will be able to rise up as an eagle in the sky. They will run without needing rest. They will walk without becoming tired.’

(Isaiah 40:31)



**‘I can do all things through Christ
because he gives me strength.’
(Philippians 4:13)**



**‘The Lord gives me strength and
makes me sing.
He has saved me.
He is my God,
and I will praise him.
He is the God of my ancestors,
and I will honour him.’**

(Exodus 15:2)



**‘So don’t worry, because I am
with you.**

**Don’t be afraid, because I am
your God.**

**I will make you strong and will
help you.**

**I will support you with my right
hand that saves you.’**

(Isaiah 41:10)



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 3 *Explore It*

**‘Finally, be strong in the Lord and
in his great power.’**

(Ephesians 6:10)



**‘Depend on the Lord and his strength.
Always go to him for help.’
(1 Chronicles 16:11)**



‘God did not give us a spirit that makes us afraid.

He gave us a spirit of power and love and self-control.’

(2 Timothy 1:7)



Deuteronomy 31:6



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 3 *Explore It*

Isaiah 40:31



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 3 *Explore It*

Philippians 4:13



Children
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Exodus 15:2



Children
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Isaiah 41:10



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Ephesians 6:10



Children
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1 Chronicles 16:11



Children
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September 2023 session 3 *Explore It*

2 Timothy 1:7



Children
& Youth

September 2023 session 3 *Explore It*

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



LOYAL RUTH

📖 Ruth chapter 1; 2:1-12; 4:13-17 Ruth stays with Naomi

🎯 Aim: To see how God used Ruth's selfless choices

Our Bible character for today showed a different kind of strength from the people we have met so far this month. Faced with challenging circumstances, she displayed inner strength and made choices that demonstrated her loyalty and kindness. We can learn a lot from Ruth about sharing God's kindness with others.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- Explore It Ideas handout

You will need:

- Lots of sticky notes, in two different colours
- To prepare for possible prayer activities that your group may choose to do – see Pray It

Start It

💬 Say: Today's Bible character had to make a lot of difficult choices that impacted her and the people around her. For our starter today you need to make some much easier choices that will hopefully make you smile as you think about them.

Choose from the following selection of 'Would You Rather' questions and discuss them with the children.

- Would you rather be on Superman's team or Spiderman's team?
- Would you rather be forced to sing along or dance to every single song you hear?
- Would you rather spend a day in the hot sun or in the icy cold?
- Would you rather never be able to go out during the day or never be able to go out at night?
- Would you rather win an Oscar or the FIFA World Cup?
- Would you rather never eat bananas again or have to eat a banana every day?
- Would you rather be able to speak any language or be able to communicate with animals?

Sing It

💬 Say: Over the past few weeks we have met characters who showed physical strength when facing an enemy. Today's Bible character showed a different kind of strength. There were moments when she must have felt afraid, but she trusted that God was with her.

💬 Say: Let's share our memory verse together.

Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

'Be strong and courageous song – Joshua' 1:9 by Kickstart Worship (3:20)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjRww6Ocs_k

Tell It

Say: In our sessions so far, we have met many strong people.

Ask: What kind of strength have most of them shown?

Say: Joshua pressed forward with the strength of the Lord into battle. After a bit of persuading, Gideon did the same and defeated the Midianites. Samson used his physical strength to fight the Philistines – and have the odd temper tantrum. All these characters used physical strength, but today's character is totally different.

Video

God's Story: Ruth by Crossroads Kids' Club (3:37)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=irThVpdeSxk

Watch: 0:00 to 1:40. (If anybody was going to rescue Ruth and Naomi, it was Boaz.)

Say: Ruth lived in Moab with her mother-in-law Naomi and her sister-in-law Orpah. Their husbands tragically died, and the three women were left alone. Naomi decided to return home to Bethlehem in Judah, a place her daughters had never visited before. She told Orpah and Ruth to return their own homes, but Ruth refused.

Ask:

- Why do you think Naomi wanted Ruth and Orpah to go home?
- How were things different for women at that time?

Say: Naomi knew it was a big decision for Ruth to join her in Judah, as Ruth wasn't an Israelite. But Ruth would not back down.

Read:

'But Ruth said, "Don't ask me to leave you! Don't beg me not to follow you! Every place you go, I will go. Every place you live, I will live. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God. And where you die, I will die. And there I will be buried. I ask the Lord to punish me terribly if I do not keep this promise: only death will separate us."'

— (Ruth 1:16-17 *ICB*)

Say: Ruth had the choice to return home to her family or stay with Naomi. She made the brave choice to trust God and go with Naomi.

Ask:

- What happened when they returned to Naomi's hometown?
- How did they find food?
- What did Boaz do to help Ruth collect more food?

Say: At the end of the last clip we heard Naomi describe Boaz as a 'family redeemer'. Let's watch the rest of the clip to find out what that means.

Watch: 1:41 to 3:37.

Ask:

- What strange thing did Naomi ask Ruth to do?
- How did Boaz react?
- What might have happened if Ruth had ignored Naomi?

Read:

'So Boaz took Ruth and married her. The Lord let her become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son. The women told Naomi, "Praise the Lord who gave you this grandson. And may he become famous in Israel. He will give you new life. And he will take care of you in your old age. This happened because of your daughter-in-law. She loves you. And

she is better for you than seven sons. She has given birth to your grandson.”

‘Naomi took the boy, held him in her arms and cared for him. The neighbours gave the boy his name. These women said, “This boy was born for Naomi.” The neighbours named him Obed. Obed was Jesse’s father. And Jesse was the father of David.’

— (Ruth 4:13-17 ICB)

Ask: What connection does Ruth have to King David and therefore to Jesus?

Say: Ruth’s inner strength meant that:

- she stayed with Naomi when it would have been easier to go home,
- followed the instructions of her mother-in-law when she could have been embarrassed, and
- became part of God’s family when she could have stayed in Moab.

Say: Ruth’s obedience meant that God could do amazing things in her life.

Action It

Ask: Think about all the events in today’s story and how each character reacted. What examples of kindness do we find in Ruth’s story?

Kindness activity

For this activity, you will need two packs of different-coloured sticky notes.

One colour will be used for the children to think of people they could show kindness to. Encourage the children to focus on types of people rather than specific names, eg mum, dad, grandparents, teachers, friends ... Write each type of person on the sticky notes and spread them out on a table or wall.

Using the other coloured notes, help the children generate as many different ways as possible to show kindness, and place them next to the appropriate people. The aim of the activity is to think of all the ways we can show kindness to others.

At some point a suggested act of kindness will work for more than one person and should prompt a good discussion with the children. Try and encourage the children to think of as many ideas as possible.

When you have filled the space with acts of kindness, ask the children to discuss and choose three acts of kindness they could carry out this week. Give them a piece of paper to write down their three acts of kindness to take home.

Say: We often get very caught up in ourselves and what is happening to us. Even in difficult circumstances, Ruth took the opportunity to show kindness to others. Even when he didn’t have to, Boaz showed kindness to Ruth and Naomi – and God shows kindness to us every single day. Let’s take the opportunity to share that kindness with others.

Pray It

Say: Ruth and Naomi’s journey home was challenging. They had no idea how they would find food or shelter. It would have been easy for others to take advantage of them. Many people in the world today have to leave their homes and find a new place to live. Sadly, instead of caring as Boaz did, there are many willing to cause harm to people like Ruth and Naomi.

Day of prayer for victims of human trafficking

Explain to the children that Sunday 24 September is a day of prayer for victims of human trafficking. Discuss with the children some ways they could pray for people impacted by this horrible trade. Decide as a group your main prayer focus and spend the time planning or praying together.

Suggestions for activities are listed below:

- create a mini prayer display for the rest of the church to use
- write a prayer together for people impacted by human trafficking
- create a list of prayer topics and turn it into a prayer diary for the week. If you choose this option, then encourage the children to take a copy of the prayer diary with them to use at home.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home

SEPTEMBER
SESSION 04

LOYAL RUTH

 Ruth chapter 1; 2:1-12; 4:13-17 Ruth stays with Naomi

© Aim: To see how God used Ruth's selfless choices

FOR ME



Choose

In today's story Ruth and Naomi had to make some challenging choices.

What choices do you have to make during your week?

TOGETHER



Share

Share the story of Ruth and Naomi with the people at home.

Storytellers: Ruth & Naomi by Crossroads Kids' Club

www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNd5CQE-jdU&t=1s

- ➡ What would they have done if they were in Ruth's position?
- ➡ What can we learn from Ruth and her story?



Song for the week

'Be strong and courageous song – Joshua' by Kickstart Worship

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljRww6Ocs_k



Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

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Explore It

FOR LEADERS



THE LISTENING SAMUEL

1 Samuel 1:10-28; 3:1-11

Aim: To learn to listen for God and speak the truth

In today's session we find Eli and Samuel fast asleep in the most holy place in the Temple. Samuel hears the Lord speak but thinks it is the voice of his teacher, Eli. After a disturbed night's sleep Eli realises that God is the one talking to Samuel. This gives Samuel the opportunity to listen carefully to God and bravely speak the truth, delivering a message that the people of Israel, and Eli, would rather not hear.

Each child will need:

- Lollipop sticks, card, pens/pencils, scissors, glue and craft material to make puppets – see Action It
- Pens/pencils and paper
- Explore It Ideas handout

Start It

Say: In today's story our Bible character had to listen carefully to hear God. For our starter game you will need to listen carefully as well.

Video

Can you beat Mozi in clap the rhythm! Clapping rhythm games for kids by Colour Me Mozart (2:02)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsQZX7Hhqug

Sing It

Say: Let's share our memory verse together for the final time this month.

Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

— (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

Say: For today's Sing It, you can choose from the four songs we have used in our sessions so far. We will sing your favourite one together.

'Memory verse song – Joshua 1:9' by Hillsong Kids (1:48)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyp7WNusPDg

'Be strong and courageous – Joshua 1:9' (hand motions) by Seeds Family Worship (3:15)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU45XTawnSY

'Motions (Joshua 1:9)' by Saddleback Kids (1:55)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=asjSnNgDTrw

'Be strong and courageous song – Joshua' 1:9 by Kickstart Worship (3:20)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljRww6Ocs_k

Tell It

Say: Today our Bible story is all about a very special little boy called Samuel. His parents, Hannah and Elkanah, wanted to have a child so much that they travelled to the Temple to pray. Hannah wept so much as she prayed that the priest Eli thought she was drunk. When Eli realised she hadn't been drinking and recognised her faith, he assured her that God would answer her prayer.

Ask: In what way did Hannah show that she had a strong faith in God?

Say: Hannah returned home, and a while later her baby Samuel was born. Hannah promised God that she would bring Samuel back to the Temple to serve him. Eli was surprised to see her. Let's look in the book of 1 Samuel to find out what happened next.

Read:

'She said to Eli, "As surely as you live, my master, I am the same woman who stood near you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child. The Lord answered my prayer and gave him to me. Now I give him back to the Lord. He will belong to the Lord all his life." And he worshipped the Lord there.'

— (1 Samuel 1:26-28 *ICB*)

Ask: Samuel was quite young when he was sent to live at the Temple. How would you have felt if it was you?

Say: Eli became an important person in Samuel's life, teaching him about God and how to serve in the Temple. One night something very special happened to Samuel. Let's watch the clip to find out what it was.

Video

Slapstick Theatre (Samuel and Eli) by Saddleback Kids (1:46)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9albNjFjWk

Say: In the Bible account of this story, we read that Eli and Samuel were asleep 'in the Lord's Holy Tent'. (1 Samuel 3:3)

Ask: Think back to some of our Explore It sessions last month. What was kept in the Lord's Holy Tent?

Say: The Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy Tent, so Samuel and Eli were fast asleep in a very special place. Three times God called to Samuel, and he went to his teacher Eli.

Ask:

- Have you ever felt like God is talking to you?
- What did it feel like?
- How did you respond?

Say: In his wisdom, Eli realised eventually that it was God's voice that Samuel could hear.

Read:

'So he told Samuel, "Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in bed.

'The Lord came and stood there. He called as he had before. He said, "Samuel, Samuel!"

'Samuel said, "Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.'"

— (1 Samuel 3:9-10 *ICB*)

Ask:

- What can we learn from the way Samuel responded to God?
- How could we do the same?

Say: Samuel listened carefully to God and promised to serve him. God had a difficult message for him to deliver.

Read:

'The Lord said to Samuel, "See, I am going to do something in Israel. It will shock those who hear about it. At that time I will do to Eli and his family everything I promised. I will not stop until I have finished. I told Eli I would punish his family for ever. I will do it because Eli knew his sons were evil. They spoke against me, but he did not control them. So here is what I promised Eli's family: 'Your guilt will never be removed by sacrifice or offering.'"

'Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the Tent of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli about the vision. But Eli said to him, "Samuel, my son!"

'Samuel answered, "I am here."

'Eli asked, "What did the Lord say to you? Don't hide it from me. May God punish you terribly if you hide from me anything he said to you." So Samuel told Eli everything. He did not hide anything from him. Then Eli said, "He is the Lord. Let him do what he thinks is best."

— (1 Samuel 3:11-18 ICB)

Ask: How do you think Samuel felt delivering such a difficult message from God to Eli?

Say: Samuel listened carefully to God, but he also had the courage to obey God and speak the truth to Eli.

Action It

Puppets

Create a set of mini puppet characters, using card and lollipop sticks to retell the story of Eli and Samuel. Depending on the size of your group, the children can work in teams to produce different props and characters, and write a short script to retell the story.

You could rewatch the Slapstick Theatre (Samuel and Eli) clip to recap the story if required. Give the children time to make and rehearse their puppet show and then share it with the rest of the group.

Pray It

Say: Eli was a special teacher to Samuel and helped him to hear God speaking.

Ask:

- Who is your favourite teacher?
- Why do you like them so much?

Say: On Thursday 5 October it is World Teacher Day. In our prayer time, we are going to take the opportunity to thank God for our teachers.

The children will need paper and coloured pencils for this activity. Give them time to draw a picture of their favourite teacher and write a thank you prayer around the portrait. When they have finished, sit the children in a circle and give each one an opportunity to share their picture and say a thank you prayer out loud.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home

SEPTEMBER
SESSION 05

THE LISTENING SAMUEL

 1 Samuel 1:10-28; 3:1-11

© Aim: To learn to listen for God and speak the truth

FOR ME



Create

Thursday 5 October is World Teacher Day. Create a thank you card to give to a teacher that has particularly helped you. Give thanks to God for the way they have supported your learning and helped you at school.

TOGETHER



Play

Plan to go for a walk with the people at home. Before you go, write down six sounds that you might hear on the walk. Take the list with you and listen for the sounds as you go on your walk.



Song for the week

'Memory verse song – Joshua 1:9' by Hillsong Kids
www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyp7WNusPDg

'Be strong and courageous – Joshua 1:9' (hand motions)
by Seeds Family Worship
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU45XTawnSY

'Motions (Joshua 1:9)' by Saddleback Kids
www.youtube.com/watch?v=asjSnNgDTrw

'Be strong and courageous song – Joshua' by Kickstart Worship
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljRww6Ocs_k



Memory verse

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

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