

# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



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### HERO GIDEON

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**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](http://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](https://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](https://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.
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## 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](https://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)

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### 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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### 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!

